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TRISTRAM AS HERO IN MALORY'S *MORTE DARTHUR*

by

CAROL ANN EVEREST

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CAROL ANN EVEREST

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C. a. Everest

5104 - 126 Street
EDMONTON, Alberta
T6H 3W2

April 12 1985

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Tristram as Hero in Malory's Morte Darthur" submitted by Carol Ann Everest in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Muriel A. Whitaker
Supervisor

. . . .

Patricia Demers

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Abstract

Until recently, critical assessment of the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" in Malory's Morte Darthur has been almost uniformly negative. Regarding it as a serious structural obtrusion, scholars have attacked its episodic form, its lack of concern for the traditional legend of Tristram and Isode, and most of all, its interruption of Malory's story of the birth, rise and fall of King Arthur. Some contemporary commentators acknowledge that the Tristram section does serve a purpose in the overall work, but they usually claim that its importance rests in delineating Tristram's debased chivalry.

This study disagrees with both critical positions by demonstrating that in the "Book of Sir Tristram" Malory presents Tristram as the epitome of knightly honour. Lord Raglan's study of the hero is used as a guide to show that in all versions of the legend Tristram conforms to the typical heroic pattern. In retelling the story of Tristram's life, Malory increases his hero's nobility by changing details in his French source. Tristram's companions and his conduct as a knight also serve to increase his heroic stature. Malory modifies his source to stress the honour and nobility of his hero by making Tristram's friends more noble and his enemies more villainous, alterations which provide complements and contrasts to the worshipful knight. Similarly, he removes from his source any hint of shame in Tristram's actions, whether in his love affair with Isode or in his knightly adventures. Far from degrading the

hero, Malory consistently ennobles him.

The pursuit of honour and avoidance of shame constitutes a major theme in the Morte Darthur. Noble knights become honourable through their lineage, their companions and their deeds of might and courtesy. By depicting Tristram's excellence in all aspects of the chivalrous life, Malory successfully links the Tristram section to the rest of the Morte Darthur.

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Introduction

The identity of the historical Tristram who gave his name to the most popular story of the Middle Ages[1] is lost in the obscurity of dark-age history. Critics agree, however, that the name Tristram[2] is originally Pictish. Inspired by the hero "Dry(u)stan mab Tallwch" of the Welsh legends,[3] H. Zimmer traced the name "Drust" and its derivative "Drustan" to the chronicle of real and legendary Pictish rulers of the fourth through the ninth centuries. Although both "Drust" and "Talorc(an)" were common names for Pictish kings, Zimmer identifies the very king who generated the legend: Drust filius Talorcan, who reigned over the Picts in the twilight of their power, from 780 to 785 A. D.[4]

Zimmer's view has generally been accepted by later scholars.[5] However, while agreeing with the general hypothesis, Sigmund Eisner disputes the certain identification of Drust, son of Talorcan.[6] Between the years 400 and 850 A. D., forty-five Pictish kings are recorded; ten are named "Drust" and eight are named "Talorcan." Historians agree that succession to the Pictish throne was matrilinear and that this rule breaks down only during the reigns of the later kings when Pictish influence was waning.[7] Zimmer's Drust filius Talorcan is one of these last kings mentioned before the chronicle becomes confused as to the nationality of the kings.[8] However, the Tristram of legend never becomes a king but remains a king's son. Moreover, in all forms of the legend he exhibits minimal interest in his father's lands and owes fealty to his uncle, Mark of Cornwall. This relationship reflects the practice of matrilinear succession, where the maternal uncle assumes primary responsibility for the child and the position of "sister-son" becomes most important. Indeed, the eldest "sister-son" inherits the estate.[9] Therefore, Eisner concludes that any of the Drusts or Talorcans mentioned in the chronicle could be the inspiration for the name, and it is likely that an earlier, sixth-century hero whose exploits became renowned before the declining years of Pictish domination is the historical Tristram.

In the area known today as Scotland, three separate groups of settlers lived in uneasy proximity between the sixth and ninth centuries. The Picts occupied steadily decreasing areas in the central and eastern parts of the territory. Immigrants from northern Ireland, the Scots settled in Dalriada on the northwest coast of the country, and the Cymry, or Welsh, occupied the area approximately between the modern cities of Carlisle and Glasgow and on down into present-day Wales. In Northumbria, the Angles constantly tested Pictish borders. Although no studies have yet determined influences between Celtic and Anglo-Saxon literature, considerable evidence exists in art, and it is unsafe to dismiss the possibility of interchanges between the two cultures as J. D. Bruce does in his investigation of sources for the Arthurian legend.[11] However, the Scots, the Cymry and the Picts were all Celtic peoples, linked by a similar language, and therefore the oral tradition could survive and flourish between them. Little is known about Pictish language and literature, but modern historians hypothesize that the Picts spoke a dialect of the Brythonic sub-group of the common Celtic language. In addition, the Picts were likely not a homogeneous population, and they very possibly communicated as well in the language used by the Irish and Scottish: the Goedelic sub-group.[12] Because matrilinear succession often implies exogamy,[13] the exposure of the Scots and Cymry to the Pictish culture would be even more pronounced. When dark-age geography and customs are considered, the assimilation of the Pictish hero who bequeathed his name to the legend of Tristram into Welsh and Irish story becomes clear.[14]

In the hands of the Welsh story-tellers, Tristram becomes linked to March mab Meirchiawn and his bride, Essylt, and like other heroes of originally independent sagas, drawn into the Arthurian circle. Although Breuddwyd Rhonabwy (Rhonabwy's Dream) is an early thirteenth-century composition, preserved only in the late thirteenth-century Red Book of Hergest,[15] and the Triads are recorded in manuscripts dating from the thirteenth century and later,[16] there seems to be little doubt that both contain much older material. In fact, the Triads were likely drawn up in the bardic schools of Wales as mnemonic aids to the vast body of oral material inherited from the distant past.[17] Rachel Bromwich, one of the leading authorities on early Welsh material, states that the stories told in the ancient manuscripts "bear marks of high antiquity, and those in the oldest collections must be regarded as embodying much genuine early tradition."[18]

Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis, in her exhaustive source study of the Tristram legend,[19] contends that Celtic material is responsible for the transformation of a straightforward hero story into a tragic love triangle. The Irish elopement legend of Dairmaid and Grianne likely supplied the adulterous love motif which became linked to the original legend. In addition, Loomis traces aspects of oriental tales and folktale motifs which further expanded the story. Although her findings have not convinced everyone,[20] scholarly opinion generally accepts her assumption of Celtic influences on an original hero story.

The Brythonic Celts of Wales and Brittany were connected by a common language which did not begin to form separate dialects until the seventh century, and by routes of trade and commerce. Furthermore, as early as the fifth century, waves of Britons fled to Armorica to escape the Anglo-Saxon invasions.[21] The basic Tristram story, with the love triangle probably well established, was transmitted to Brittany in the late tenth or early eleventh century.[22] The Bretons shared the Welsh enthusiasm for Arthurian material, and Tristram became the property of the bilingual troubadors. Although the basic outline was established, the Bretons added introductory material about Tristram's parents and other adventures of the hero in a courtly manner. R. S. Loomis concludes that Breton minstrels spread this and other Arthurian tales throughout the French-speaking world. He describes the minstrels as

> passionately devoted to the memory of Arthur and believing him to be still alive, linked to the Welsh by blood and by continuing intercourse, but speaking a language which was current among the nobility from the Firth of Forth to the Jordan; a class of strolling minstrels who took advantage of this fact to make a livelihood by telling their tales, of which Arthur was the centre, with such verve that they were able to fascinate counts and kings who had not the slightest racial or political tie with the British hero.[23]

From conteur to poet was not a great leap. Helen Newstead writes, ". . .it is now generally agreed that an elaborate, fully developed narrative of his [Tristram's] adventures from birth to death was already in existence in France by 1160."[24] Gertrude Loomis establishes that the heart of Tristram's story is Celtic; however, in Brittany, where the legend picked up courtly trappings, it became, in the words of R. S. Loomis, "a love story on a scale comparable to that of Paris and Helen."[25]

Commenting on the probable sources for existing medieval redactions of the Tristram legend, J. Bruce writes with assurance, "we may say that the existence of a single primitive Tristan romance. . .from which all extant versions are ultimately derived is one of the few matters of Arthurian discussion on which students are definitely agreed."[26] This lost romance, which some critics call the "archetype"[27] and others the "estoire,"[28] is still held to be the ultimate source for the five existing adaptations of the Tristram story, although G. S. Loomis cautions that "The Tristan romance is not the creation of one poet or of one day. There may well have been redactions of it in France previous to the _estoire_."[29] In the introduction to _Cligés_, Chrétien de Troyes lists the poems he had already composed, including one entitled _Li Rois Marc and Iseut la Blonde_.[30] The poem and any description of its form or content have disappeared, but many arguments and counter-arguments have been advanced as to Chrétien's relationship to the lost Tristan archetype. Critics such as F. N. Foerster in his introduction to Cligés champions Chrétien as the author of the great French masterpiece which spawned later redactions, but the majority of scholars reject this hypothesis.[31] The archetype has been dated from as early as 1066[32] to the last decades of the twelfth century.[33] The most likely date seems to be around the middle of the twelfth century.[34]

The Tristram legend is retold by three poets of the twelfth century. Thomas, an Anglo-Norman clerk, who likely wrote in England at the court of Henry II between 1155 and 1185, produced the first redaction. Most of his poem is lost; there exist only three fragments from the end of the work, totalling approximately 3150 lines. Fortunately, the content of the missing portions can be reconstructed from the masterpiece by Gottfried von Strassburg (c.1210), the English Sir Tristrem (c.1300) and the Icelandic Tristrams Saga (c.1226), all of which derive their material from Thomas' poem.[35] Scholars generally agree that the German Eilhart von Oberge created a poem which is close to the French original, both metrically and linguistically. Written about 1170, fewer than 1,000 lines remain in three manuscripts of the late twelfth century. As in the case of Thomas, however, a derivative prose adaptation and a Czechoslovakian translation survive. Béroul, a Norman troubador, completed a poem in approximately 1191 which corresponds to Eilhart in most narrative aspects. The 4,485 lines which have survived begin in the middle of the love affair between Tristram and Isode and end before Tristram's exile from the court of King Mark.

Besides the major treatments of the great love story, five episodic poems from the twelfth and thirteenth century exist. The lais of Marie de France contain one short work which deals with Tristram, although in the lai he is not identified with Arthur's court. Containing 118 verses, this poem written in the mid to late twelfth century was one of Marie de France's most popular works. Called the Lai du Chevrefeuil, it was composed in "standard literary French with Norman colouring"[36] by a lady of the court of Henry II, identified only as

Marie de France. The author assumes on the part of her readers a complete familiarity with the romance, probably provided by the Breton *conteurs* at the English court, although critics have detected similarities with Eilhart as well.

The Berne *Folie Tristan* (572 lines) and the Oxford *Folie Tristan* (898 lines) deal with Tristram's adventures when disguised as a fool. The author of the Berne *Folie* was Norman; the Oxford *Folie* was composed by an Anglo-Norman poet. No consensus of critical opinion has been reached regarding the relationship of the two *Folies*. Gerbert de Montreuil added to Chrétien's *Perceval* an episode in which Tristram assumes the role of a minstrel, and an unknown German poet wrote *Tristan als Mönch*.

Eilhart von Oberge had already attempted one German redaction of the Tristram legend (c.1170), but it is to his countryman Gottfried von Strassburg (c.1210) that the greatest accolades must be given. His poem, in which he acknowledges the influence of Thomas of Britain,[37] overlaps the source by only a few lines.[38] Considered to be "one of the supreme works of the Middle Ages," the poem transmutes what F. Whitehead describes as the "criminal infatuation" and "overmastering lust"[39] of the archetype into a sublime and transcendental experience, as foreign to the Celtic original as to the later prose redactions. Thomas may be responsible for much of the refinement of tone, for the shedding of much grossness and cruelty, and for the courtly setting, but Gottfried depicts the love between Tristram and Isode as a union on all planes: physical, spiritual, emotional.[40]

The Norwegian *Tristrams Sagā ok Ísondar* is also indebted to

Thomas' poem, but this condensed prose rendition is relatively true to the original without the literary quality displayed by Gottfried's masterpiece. Composed by a Brother Robert in 1226 in response to a commission from King Hákon Hákonsson of Norway, the translation omits "the detailed descriptions and the subtleties of emotion in order to get forward with the plot."[41] Scandinavian interest in the Tristram legend is demonstrated by the emergence of several popular songs in Icelandic, Norwegian, Danish and Faroese which deal with some aspect of the love story.

In England, as well, the tragedy of Tristram and Isode was very popular, even though outside of Malory's late fifteenth-century treatment, the only extant English version of the legend is a late thirteenth-century verse romance based on Thomas' poem.[42] The Middle English Sir Tristrem[43] has suffered harsh criticism from most scholars in the past century. R. S. Loomis dismisses the work as a "very much garbled and condensed version in a jingling meter,"[44] and, in his Introduction to Medieval Romance, A. B. Taylor condemns the metric form as "hopeless for a study of tragic love."[45] Recently, however, some attempt to appreciate the poem's artistry has been made. Arguing for a reappraisal of Sir Tristrem, T. C. Rumble convincingly demonstrates a conscious shaping of incident throughout the poem. He concludes that the poet "was not indiscriminately condensing or muddling his source, but reworking it both in form and spirit in an effort to render it more consistent with his own tastes and with the tastes of the English audience for which his version was intended."[46] The "jingling meter" so disliked by Loomis is defended by C. E. Pickford as "experimental," and he congratulates the author on being willing to "break new ground."[47] Responding to the poem's detractors, he writes: "Whereas it is true that the form is somewhat involved, and, I would concede, perhaps rather too light to bear the weight of the romance, it is also the case that the writer can handle it well." He commends to the reader's attention the "vigorous narrative qualities, and the simple forthrightness of this English version."[48] Educated and cultured members of English society had access to the Tristram legend in the elegant Anglo-Norman renditions; Rumble suggests that the Middle English Sir Tristrem was written for a monolingual audience eager to be entertained by tales of love and daring.[49] Whatever the case, the story of Tristram and his lady, Isode, was very well known in the Middle Ages, as John Gower's lines written in the fourteenth century indicate:

> In every mannes mouth it is
> How Tristram was of Love drunke
> With Bele Isolde, whan they drunke
> The drink which Brangweine hem betok.[50]

Numerous depictions of scenes from the story on everything from paving tiles to jewel chests to misericord carvings attest to Gower's observations.[51]

Although the Tristram poems were popular in their time, by the middle of the thirteenth century they had become displaced by "an inferior brood of prose romances, beginning with the prose Tristan."[52] R. S. Loomis echoes the sentiments of many scholars by labelling these prose redactions "prolix, tasteless and banal."[53] However harsh modern criticism may be, there is no question that in the late Middle Ages, the French prose Tristan was the most popular of all Arthurian romances.

Its very popularity poses a problem for scholarship today, because it exists in a great many manuscripts and in several printed editions, all of which differ in small or large ways.[54] This diversity makes speaking of one prose Tristan very difficult. Indeed, Renée Curtis documents seventy-eight manuscripts, including fragments, in her definitive study of the prose romance. These manuscripts vary in age from the early thirteenth century to the early sixteenth century.[55] They have been divided into two rough groupings: a small number of manuscripts written between 1225 and 1235 called the First Version, in which the story is relatively short and condensed, and the Second Version, including most manuscripts written later than the second half of the thirteenth century, in which the tale is expanded by the inclusion of innumerable chivalric adventures and digressions.[56]

The author of the prose Tristan remains unknown, despite the fact that manuscripts attribute the First Version to Luce of Gaut (Galt, near Salisbury) and the Second Version to Hélie de Boron, a relative of Robert de Boron. As early as 1886 Gaston Paris proved that Hélie de Boron was a fictitious name, likely contrived to capitalize on Robert's fame,[57] and Luce de Gaut cannot be traced in any conclusive manner.[58] Although the prose writer knew the poetic tradition, and certain borrowings have been traced, most scholars believe that it is an independent work drawn directly from the lost primitive French archetype.[59] In addition to the archetype, the prose Lancelot clearly influenced the structure and action of the prose Tristan, turning it into a romance of chivalry. As Curtis explains, "En effet, l'arthurisation de la légende primitive qui transparaît déjà dans les poèmes de Tristan, est ici complète: Tristan devient un chevalier de la Table Ronde."[60] Where Curtis contends that "Les grandes lignes de l'histoire originelle sont conservées"[61] in at least the first part of the romance, Bruce laments that

> . . .the Old Celtic story of lawless and irresistible passion, with all the primitive elements, both of poetry and of barbarism, which had continued to cling to it even in the hands of the French metrical romances, was now to be diluted with innumerable episodes that reflected the occupations, tastes and ideals of French lords and ladies in the first half of the thirteenth century.[62]

The prose writer was certainly more interested in chivalry and courtly traditions than were the poets, but he used chivalric conventions as a setting for the tale of passion which had been inherited from the earlier legend. Commenting on the admirable qualities of the French prose romances, P. E. Tucker remarks that their "outstanding and distinctive quality is the skill in which they make chivalric adventures the background for their treatment of love."[63] However, this love is not the same as the tragic commitment found in the poems. In his discussion of the differences between the prose romance and the poetic tradition, Vinaver explains that

> The whole essence of the early Tristan romance is the silent conflict between the superhuman power of love represented by the magic potion on one hand, and the strength of feudal allegiance on the other. The tragedy arises from the fact that the lovers never refuse to recognize the rightfulness and the sanctity of the social order which causes their misfortune. They can neither alter nor escape from it.[64]

However, in the prose romance, situations and characters are changed. Tristram is no longer a tragic figure but is transformed into a chivalric hero whose fame surpasses even Launcelot's; his love for Isode is presented as a natural reward for his heroic behaviour. King Mark suffers dreadfully at the hands of the prose writer. Far from being the admirable, noble and generous overlord of Gottfried's poem, for example, he becomes a vicious coward who is clearly unworthy to possess the beautiful Isode. While admittedly presented as more human than in the poems, Isode emerges as a rather unattractive figure who delights in duping her husband and in testing her lover. She no longer claims the reader's sympathy as the innocent victim of supernatural forces beyond her control.

The ending, too, is changed to reflect the prose writer's new emphasis. In the poems, Isode White Hands reports the wrong colour sail on the boat bearing the Irish Isode to heal Tristram (yet again) of a poisoned wound.[65] Tristram dies of despair, and the Irish Isode dies of grief at finding him dead. They are buried separately, and from each grave grow vines which meet and intertwine. In the prose Tristan (except for MS. B. N. Fr. 103 which repeats the "poetic" ending), Mark kills Tristram with a poisoned lance while the hero plays his harp for Isode. Isode then dies in Tristram's last embrace. Even Mark realizes at this point the miracle of their love and orders that they be buried together. Because the prose romance shifts the emphasis of the story to a confrontation between Mark and Tristram, the modified ending reflects the tension between hero and villain rather than between ill-fated lovers.

Malory found the focus on chivalric endeavours in the prose Tristan to be in keeping with his own interests when retelling the stories of the Arthurian cycle. He condensed the massive French romance to a fraction of its original size by pruning superfluous adventures, by suppressing supernatural happenings and by retelling episodes in as simple and straightforward a manner as possible.[66] Although he frequently cites the "Frenyssh Booke" as authority for his tale, an appeal to authority similar to most medieval writers, he follows but also transforms his source. As C. D. Benson remarks, "To adopt Eugene Vinaver's terms, the *matière* of Malory's work may be borrowed, but he adds a *sens* that makes the result genuinely original."[67]

The "Frenysshe Booke" itself has been lost, but Vinaver has done a masterful piece of detective work in determining which of the existing manuscripts reflect the source most closely.[68] Vinaver claims that Malory possessed one manuscript which resembled portions of the manuscripts identified as Paris, MSS. Bibliothèque Nationale Fr. 103, 334 and 99. These manuscripts are not direct sources, but it is likely that they and the "Frenyssh Booke" derive from the same original romance, or perhaps the "Frenyssh Booke" is the source for the manuscripts mentioned above.

Malory completed his work in about 1470, and it was first published by Caxton in 1485. In 1489 the first printed edition of the French prose *Tristan* was published, based on Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS. Fr. 103. In addition, Spanish and Italian redactions were printed in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. There is no complete edition of any manuscript of the French prose *Tristan* today, with the exception of Pickford's facsimile edition of Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS. Fr. 103.[71] Renée Curtis is in the process of editing Carpentras, Bibliothèque Municipale MS. Fr. 404, and has to date published two parts.[72] The most useful resource remains Eilert Löseth's summary and compilation of the manuscripts held by the Bibliothèque Nationale, published in 1891.[73]

Vinaver states that Malory is "un simple traducteur et abréviateur"[74] of the French source. He makes " une bonne copie d'un modèle mal choisi."[75] However, when one looks closely, one is able to appreciate Malory's original contributions, which Vinaver describes as "ses idées, ses sympathies, ses procédés littéraires qui. . .percent à travers le lourd fatras des récits aveuglément recopiés."[76]

The purpose of this thesis is to show that Malory's original contributions are not insignificant and that he shapes and changes his source to reveal a unique and personal emphasis. Curtis' caution about the study of the prose Tristan applies equally well to Malory:

> There can be no doubt that the Prose Tristan is very different from the other romances that were written about Tristan and Iseut; and clearly the author had every intention it should be so. It is a grave error, therefore, to approach the work by comparing it with other works and concluding that certain ideas or feelings are much more successfully conveyed by Thomas or Béroul. It is important to understand the nature of the changes made, and define what the author has set out to do; only then has one a right to judge whether or not he has succeeded.[77]

Those who read Malory have often neglected to consider the Morte Darthur with similar sensitivity.

The "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones," especially, has fared poorly in literary criticism largely because of modern expectations of what constitutes artistic unity. As early as 1804 Sir Walter Scott cautioned those "unaccustomed to the study of romance" to "beware of trusting to this work" which was "extracted at Hazard, and without much art or combination, from the various French prose folios."[78] More recently, Eugene Vinaver, whose strong critical views expressed in numerous articles have shaped the course of Malory scholarship, has remained constant in his dislike of the Tristram section. Calling it Malory's "longest and least attractive book,"[79] he laments its central position which destroys what he perceives to be Malory's vision of "la gloire et la décadence de la Table Ronde."[80] He states unequivocally: ". . .le livre de Malory aurait acquis plus d'unité sans le roman de Tristan."[81] In a footnote he approves of editors who omit the section entirely: "Dans certaines éditions populaires cette partie est même supprimée."[82] In fact, in order to appreciate Malory's magnificent unity, he claims that "Il est légitime et indispensable d'en détacher le Tristan."[83] E. K. Chambers similarly fails to appreciate the Tristram section, maintaining that until the final chapters Malory "rather bungled his structural problem" by filling his book with "beginnings which have no end and ends which never had a beginning."[84] He suggests that Malory "would have done better to have left the Tristan alone, and kept to the Lancelot."[85]

Chambers regrets Malory's preoccupation with knightly matters at the expense of grand passion:

> Malory has in his hands two of the world's dozen great love stories and he does not succeed in telling either of them completely. The earlier scenes between Tristram and Iseult are hidden in an overgrowth of commonplace chivalric adventures.[86]

Although slightly more sympathetic to Malory's emphasis, Vinaver makes a similar point:

> He may have despised the old methods of story-telling, he may have misunderstood the psychology of romantic love, but with the ideals of perfect knighthood he never lacked sympathy.[87]

In his delineation of these ideals, Malory ignores the sense of great tragedy which had already been diminished in his source and disrupts the linear progression of plot from Arthur's birth to his death.[88]

Malory's interest in knightly deeds, especially in the "Book of Tristram," irritates many readers, including Robert Graves, who complains that

> . . .we are given no relief while the knights joust, love, hunt, make merry and perfunctorily attend mass. Many of them seem to spend their entire lives on guard at some bridge, or lurking in an enchanted castle from which to charge out upon the unwary.[89]

In his study of structure in the Morte Darthur, Stephen Knight similarly comments that

> . . .Lamerak, Lancelot, Palomides, Dinadan and others ride back and forth, across our field of vision as Malory ploughs doggedly on through his source, and the reader may well decide that the delights of the episodic method are easily exhausted.[90]

He continues with a short discussion of episodic structure, expresses some annoyance that Malory did not adhere more closely to the original love story of Tristram and Isode, and then ignores the entire central section of the Morte Darthur to pursue an investigation of the final chapters, which he finds more structurally acceptable. Malory's apparent lack of structure in his discussion of knightly endeavours causes Charles Saunders and Charles Ward in their introduction to an edition of the Morte Darthur to admit that while

> . . .Malory was notably successful in working out the larger structure of his work, he frequently got lost in the wide-stretching wilderness of knightly adventure. . . .he could not always keep his restless knights in hand.[91]

In condemning Malory's emphasis on chivalric achievement they echo Vida D. Scudder who complains that Malory "throws nearly all he cares to tell about the lovers into the eighth book [Caxton's Malory] and proceeds in the ninth and interminable tenth to wander off into Arthur-land at large."[92]

Although Maureen Fries eventually argues for a structural link between the "Book of Tristram" and the rest of Malory's work, she begins her discussion with the statement that "Malory's 'Tristram' has usually been regarded as an ungainly narrative mistake, consuming over a third of the volume of the Morte Darthur but contributing little to its narrative development."[93] Commenting on its apparent lack of agreement with the main story of the rise and fall of King Arthur, D. S. Brewer observes that

> . . .the 'Book of Sir Tristram' which is rather more than a third of the whole book, and comes right in the middle, is by general consent the least satisfactory of Malory's tales. If I were contending that there was a modern organic unity of design in Malory's work, the 'Tristram' would in itself be enough to refute me.[94]

Brewer proceeds to demonstrate that Malory's unity is thematic rather than organic. In his 1922 monograph on Sir Thomas Malory, Chambers, too, condemned Malory's structure:

> We expect a work of fiction to have a beginning, a middle and an end; to progress, however deviously, through the medium of consistent personalities to an intelligible issue. The Morte Darthur does not satisfy this expectation.[95]

The "Book of Sir Tristram" has some champions, however, particularly among more recent scholars who argue that its place in the Morte Darthur is both necessary and useful. Although she calls Malory's treatment of the Tristram legend a "mutilated and hybrid version" of the "fine old tale,"[96] Scudder defends Malory's approach when the Tristram section is viewed in terms of the rest of the Morte Darthur.

She contends that Tristram's adventures explore the various forms of chivalrous love. Having investigated feudal loyalty in the early books, Malory turns to "L'amour Courtois" before dealing with mystic asceticism in the Grail Quest.[97]

Rumble, too, considers the "Book of Sir Tristram" to be important in Malory's overall plan. After quoting Chambers, he enthusiastically exclaims, ". . .in the Morte Darthur, the 'Tristram' provides precisely the middle that the French Arthurian Cycle lacked."[98] Arguing that the "Tristram" is sufficiently linked to the rest of the Morte to be artistically acceptable, Brewer contends that it is "well connected to the 'Quest of the Sangrail'" and that it could be placed in no other part of Malory's work.[99] Fries sees parallels between the treatment of Launcelot and Tristram, calling Tristram a counter-hero who is "deliberately designed to contrast with and to complete the 'Lancelot.'"[100]

The vendetta between the families of King Lot and King Pellinore developed largely within the Tristram section "comes to infect the whole of King Arthur's court and to split that court into the opposing factions which will shortly bring it to disaster."[101] Moorman claims that Malory intentionally gives unity to his work by focusing upon three causes of the downfall of Arthur's kingdom: the failures in love, in loyalty and in religion.[102] The Lot-Pellinore feud, begun early in the Morte Darthur by Pellinore's killing of Lot, and Gawain's subsequent revenge, culminates in the treacherous murder of Lamerok in the Tristram section. In addition, the démesure of the Orkney clan points ominously to a catastrophe to come. Such links tie the "Book of Tristram" to the Morte Darthur as a whole and attest to its importance in Malory's vision.

Malory's attention to events within the "Tristram" itself is highlighted by those critics who maintain that it possesses an internal unity of characterization and focus. E. L. Effland suggests that Malory unifies the "Tristram" by his creation of continuing conflicts; for example, the hostility between Tristram and Palomides, and a far-reaching investigation into knightly behaviour.[103] Praising the "Book of Sir Tristram" for containing "some of the most delightful parts of the Morte Darthur," Larry D. Benson censures modern editors for mercilessly cutting it or omitting it altogether.[104] Furthermore, in contrast to commentators such as Chambers, who heave a sight of relief when they "get clear of the Tristan,"[105] Benson claims that "The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones is the centerpiece of the Morte Darthur, a third of the entire work given over to a lively and leisurely account of Arthurian chivalry in all its variety. . . ."[106] Even Vinaver concedes Malory's success in depicting knightly endeavours. Studying Malory's indebtedness to the French prose Tristan, he comments that the Tristram in the Morte Darthur develops "les éléments chevaleresque du roman, afin de présenter un tableau plus parfait du monde de la chevalerie."[107] Arguing against those who would deny any clear structure to the "Book of Tristram" itself and who fail to perceive its relationship to the rest of the Morte Darthur, Benson writes: "The tale is a failure only from the standpoint of modern ideas of plot, and we must therefore give most of our attention to its thematic structure."[108] Calling on readers to abandon modern notions of artistic unity, Brewer warns that "to read Malory's Morte Darthur as a novel is to misread it, misunderstand it, misjudge it and, worst fate of all, not to enjoy it."[109]

Many themes are woven into the fabric of a work as complex as the Morte Darthur, but one stands out in its simplicity: the theme of honour. Brewer identifies the quest for and retention of honour as "the strongest motivating force in the society which Malory creates."[110] Honour, which Malory usually calls "worship," is synonymous with "reputation." In his essay on the meaning of honour, J. Pitt-Rivers defines the term:

> Honour is the value of a person in his own eyes, but also in the eyes of his society. It is his estimation of his own worth, his claim to pride, but it is also the acknowledgement of that claim, his excellence recognized by society, his right to pride.[111]

As the narrator of the Morte Darthur remarks after Tristram's adulterous affair with Sir Segwarde's wife:

> And thus hit paste on many wykes and dayes, and all was forgyffyn and forgetyn, for sir Segwardes durste nat have ado with sir Trystrames because of his noble proues, and also because he was nevew unto kynge Marke. Therefore he lette hit overslyppe, for he that hath a prevy hurte is loth to have a shame outewarde.[112]

To keep his reputation Segwardes is willing to forgive Tristram's affront. As Pitt-Rivers points out, honour and goodness do not always coincide,[113] although society does not overtly recognize the tension. Malory's views are unclear; as Brewer remarks, "he has a rich inconsistency."[114] The attainment of worship, however, is without doubt a powerful theme in Malory's Morte Darthur, lending it unity even when digressions take the reader far from the halls of Camelot.

In Malory, honour is achieved through lineage, through association with other honourable knights and through deeds of courtesy and prowess.[115] P. Bennett focuses on the centrality of the quest for worship; he identifies "that life of adventures which is at the heart of the existence of Arthur's knights" as "one of the underlying themes and motifs of the book."[116] John Lawlor, too, states: "Arthur the king, the earthly chivalry and its accomplishments. . .this is the centre of [Malory's] attention."[117] In his work on chivalry in the fifteenth century, L. D. Benson asserts that "honour--or, to use Malory's favorite word, 'worship'--is the central concern of fifteenth-century knights both in fiction and in life."[118] Explaining that "chivalry is more than a nebulous term for the subject matter of the work: it is an ideal of definite though changing content, the theme of all the stories which have been bound together,"[119] Tucker, also, points to the paramount importance of knightly deeds. The quest for honour constitutes the focal point for both the Morte Darthur as a whole and for the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones."

A corollary to the attainment of worhip is the avoidance of shame, for shameful behaviour places a knight outside the glorious Arthurian world. This notion is clearly evident in the words of a spy from Arthur's enemies, who attests to the nobility of the Round Table: "there ys such a felyship that they may never be brokyn, and well-nyghe all the world holdith with Arthure, for there ys the floure of chevalry" (118). Worthy knights are welcomed into the charmed circle, whereas shameful knights grow vicious with despair and envy. Malory's delineation of honour and shame provides the central thematic thread which is woven into the narrative throughout the Morte Darthur. It contributes to the unity of the book and helps unify the individual chapters, including the much-neglected "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones."

Malory develops his theme not by didactic pronouncements, but by numerous examples of chivalry at work. Although the Morte may emerge as a "handbook of knightly behaviour, according to Malory's standard,"[120] it is a well illustrated handbook. The lessons present themselves in terms of social interactions between characters, not as dry lists of acceptable and unacceptable conduct. Malory's ability to bring rules of chivalry to life impresses Benson, who says, "all the characters in this book--the evil as well as the 'good knights'--supply varying perspectives on the code of chivalry."[121] By embodying knightly virtues and vices in the knights and ladies who occupy the pages of the "Tristram," Malory illustrates chivalric society in action. Each episode is thematically linked to those which precede and to those which follow by an investigation of what constitutes worshipful or shameful conduct. Quests and adventures, in themselves seemingly repetitive and unrelated, illustrate a rich variety of responses to chivalric life. Each adventure reflects the common theme of the search for honour and the avoidance of shame.

Malory's emphasis on this central theme reveals itself through his diction, through statements provided by honourable knights regarding acceptable knightly behaviour and through consistent characterization which builds upon a long series of honourable or shameful deeds. No comparison with his source, the French prose Tristan, is necessary in order to perceive his preoccupation with knightly worship, but its importance can be more fully appreciated by looking closely at the earlier romance. Although the exact manuscript which Malory used has never been discovered, Vinaver has reconstructed the content of the romance from the surviving manuscripts. Some caution is necessary, however, in making arguments based on this reconstruction, as James W. Spisak wisely advocates: "while we may be grateful that this task was so skilfully done, we must be cautious when drawing conclusions about Malory's use of material."[122] However, for an investigation of Malory's emphasis on honour and shame, the summary and compilation of the French prose Tristan produced by Eilert Löseth in 1891 serves adequately.

Writing in modern French with generous quotations from the manuscripts, Löseth provides an outline based on the twenty-four manuscripts held by the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. These manuscripts provide a good sample of the variations on the Tristram legend which flourished between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries. For purposes of comparison, this compilation, in which Löseth notes all variations, hiatuses and changes in order, is more useful than a translation of any single manuscript. If Malory's redaction does differ significantly from Löseth's summary, it probably would differ as well from any single manuscript of the prose Tristan, and its originality is therefore more likely.[123]

Malory follows the general outline of his source to a great extent, but he changes major and minor details, comments upon and emphasizes certain characteristics, omits some material and augments other sections. In short, he shapes and colours his source to create a new form. Spisak notes that "even when he most closely followed his source. . .Malory was not simply translating but also selecting, compressing and rearranging as he saw fit."[124] Rumble agrees:

> A really close comparison of Malory's "Tristram" and all of

> the other versions remaining will disclose quite a number of. . .differences. Moreover, such a comparison reveals what seems to me a fairly complex and consciously worked out pattern of interrelationships and differences.[125]

Respect for Malory's treatment of his source has not always been forthcoming in critical circles. Misled perhaps by Caxton's Prologue that explains how Malory came to write the Morte Darthur ("whyche copye syr Thomas Malorye dyd take oute of certeyn bookes of Frensshe and reduced it into Englysshe"),[126] scholars have dismissed the work as "une traduction abrégée du cycle arthurian Français" and the "Book of Tristram" an an "impitoyable compression."[127] Reacting to such condemnation, L. D. Benson welcomes the modern interest in Malory's artistry:

> The old idea of Malory as a genial but usually bungling translator has been changed by [recent] criticism which has demonstrated clearly that Malory is an artist of skill and imagination, worthy of academic respect as well as general popularity.[128]

Vinaver, however, unwilling to credit Malory with much artistic success, asserts that those elements which can be readily identified as Malory's own, "such as the author's ideas, his prejudices, his conscious tendencies. . .are those which matter least."[129] But this molding and directing has produced a work significantly different from the prose Tristan. This difference is reflected in Malory's emphasis on the pursuit and attainment of honour which provides thematic unity in the long and digressive "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones."

Vinaver's choice of title for the section of the Morte Darthur which deals with the legend of Tristram and Isode is particularly suitable because Malory emphasizes the exploits of his hero, not the tragedy of ill-fated lovers. Tristram's involvement with Isode provides a background against which the hero seeks honour and eventual admittance to Arthur's court.[130] Because he considers Tristram the perfect gentleman and knight, Malory alters his source to increase his hero's honour. By subtle and significant changes of emphasis, he molds the stories of the prose Tristan to highlight Tristram's worship and chivalry. Although he reproduces the biographical details of Tristram's life as found in earlier redactions, he colours many of the descriptions to intensify the reader's respect for this peerless knight. Tristram is established as a hero from the moment of his birth, and the events of his life reinforce this initial assessment.

Honourable companions also serve as a source of worship for Malory's knights. Malory carefully shapes his source to assure that Tristram's closest friends are above reproach. For example, the Isode of the Morte Darthur far surpasses the Isode of the prose Tristan in admirable qualities, and even the cynical Dinadan becomes much more attractive because of Malory's judicious emendations. In addition, Malory depicts Tristram's enemies as constantly shameful, a change which provides a more dramatic contrast to his hero.

Finally, the hero obtains honour through his conduct. As Brewer states:

> How is honour obtained in this fierce, masculine, aristocratic society? Primarily, as numberless instances and remarks will show, by fighting bravely in battle or tournament; specifically by defeating the enemy, or by helping friends who are in difficulty, and by fighting fairly.[131]

Throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram," Malory places his hero in situations which test his prowess and his chivalry. Although the plot may follow the direction of the French romance, Malory's creative hand transforms potentially dishonourable episodes into affirmations of Tristram's nobility. Malory consciously modifies his source to emphasize Tristram's honour and, in R. M. Lumiansky's words, to create a "highly original literary work."[132] A close comparison with the French prose Tristan demonstrates the skill with which Malory manipulates old stock tales to give them new life and meaning. Subsequent chapters will examine Malory's handling of his source in reference to Tristram's biography, companions and conduct.

Chapter I

The Hero's Biography: Tristram and the Tradition

The Tristram legend survives in many redactions, and reconstructions of earlier works have been attempted by notable scholars.[1] Although each of these works maintains its own emphasis and direction in terms of theme and characterization, the bare plot remains relatively constant in all versions. Tristram's unusual birth, his defeat of human or supernatural champions for the public good, his doomed love affair with a princess who becomes his uncle's wife, his exile and eventual death provide a skeleton which is fleshed out by each author in his own fashion. The significant similarities in Tristram's story establish him as a champion who fits the pattern of a traditional hero as described by Lord Raglan in his definitive study.[2]

In the poetic tradition represented by such works as those of Eilhart von Oberge and Gottfried von Strassburg, Tristram is a tragic figure whose knightly honour is compromised and eventually destroyed by his uncontrollable passion for Isode of Ireland, wife of his uncle, King Mark. Tristram's promising career is cut short by the magical love potion intended for Mark and his bride. Servants mistakenly give the fatal drink to Tristram and Isode on their voyage to her nuptials in Cornwall. At this point Tristram loses control of his destiny and becomes bound by his unsanctioned passion. In his analysis of heroic poetry, C. M. Bowra comments on the ineluctable course of the fatal mistake: ". . .on such occasions it is difficult to escape from a sense of doom, which will be fulfilled, whatever human beings do to prevent it."[3] In the poems, Tristram is aware that his love, which becomes his reason for existence, will also lead to his death. The frequently repeated lines of his love song to Isode bear witness to his knowledge:

Isot ma drue, Isot mamie,
En vus ma mort, en vus ma vie.[4]

Tristram's disastrous mistake leads to his equally disastrous choice, which, as Bowra explains, entails the hero's destruction whatever decision is made.[5] Tristram can choose to absent himself from the object of his love, thereby ensuring both their deaths, for the love potion's effect cannot be prevented, or he can continue in his illicit affair which erodes both integrity and honour. Either way, he is doomed.

The prose tradition, represented by the French prose Tristan and by the portion of Malory's Morte Darthur which Vinaver has called the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones," virtually ignores the tragic potential of the love story and focuses instead on Tristram's abilities as a chivalric hero.[6] In the vast maze of knightly adventure and achievement, the thread of the ancient, ill-fated love is lost, although the narrative remains true to the main points of plot as outlined above. Renée Curtis comments on the French prose Tristan:

> Although most of the well known episodes and characters reappear in the prose version, it has been calculated that they take up no more than a fiftieth part of the whole. . . .The emphasis has entirely shifted: what was essentially a tale of love. . .has become a biographical romance, the story of Tristan's life.[7]

Through his achievements as related in this long biography, Tristram emerges as the epitome of knightly virtue. W. T. H. Jackson draws attention to the differences between an epic and a chivalric hero in his discussion of Gottfried's poem. Although bravery, loyalty and physical might are required of both epic and chivalric heroes, according to Jackson, "The qualities which distinguish the knight of the romance from the warrior of the epics are those connected with his nonfighting activities, his life at court, in other words, his leisure."[8] In the prose Tristan, and even more so in Malory, Tristram's qualities as a gentleman are highlighted. He is well educated in music and hunting; he is courteous to friends and enemies alike; he serves his lady with honour and loyalty and undertakes many private battles for her sake. The epic hero fights for the public weal, as Tristram does when he defeats The Morholt or the dragon in the poems; only in the prose romances does Tristram also joust, attend tournaments and follow the dictums of knight-errantry. Malory particularly admires Tristram as a chivalric hero, frequently changing his source to emphasize Tristram's nobility and courtesy.

Raglan's description of the typical hero's life provides an excellent framework for a discussion of Tristram as hero, and a comparison of the poetic tradition with the prose redactions shows clearly the prose writer's concern with chivalric virtues over tragic destiny. Malory's emphasis on Tristram's honour and courtesy becomes apparent as well when episodes from the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" are closely compared to source material.

According to Raglan, the typical hero begins life as the son of a royal mother and a king who is often her near relative. A survey of all versions of the Tristram legend confirms that Tristram fits the pattern very closely. In Eilhart's poem, which constitutes the earliest extant redaction (c. 1170), Tristram's father is a "noble king called Rivalin in the land of Loonis,"[9] who marries Mark's sister, Blanchefleur, as a reward for wartime services. Gottfried's later masterpiece, the Tristan (c. 1210), has Rivalin not as king but as ruler of a country held in fealty to an overlord.[10] He marries Blancheflor after she conceives his child. Following the prose Tristan, Malory changes Tristram's parents' names to Melyodas and Elysabeth (French: Meliadus and Helyabel or Ysabel), and without mentioning the courtship, comments that "by fortune" (371) they are married. Malory changes his source in this regard, for in the prose romance, Meliadus marries Helyabel at the insistence of Mark. Clearly, from the outset Malory is concerned that Tristram's honour be untainted by obligation to his evil uncle. In addition, Malory omits the long pedigree provided in the prose Tristan and begins his tale with Tristram's immediate forebears.[11] Vinaver points out that the genealogy provided by the prose romance establishes Candace as the common ancestor of Mark and Melyodas, and that Mark's probable intention was to unite the two kingdoms under one ruler.[12] The noble prince Tristram, therefore, claims royal blood on both sides, and, in at least one version, the French prose Tristan, his father and mother are related. His ancestry clearly qualifies him for an heroic destiny.

According to Raglan's model of the hero's life, unusual circumstances often surround the child's conception, and the hero is frequently reputed to be the son of a god. In most of the redactions the circumstances of Tristram's conception are not unusual, although in all the poetic versions he is conceived, often out of wedlock, before his parents leave Cornwall.[13] His nativity is invariably connected with his mother's death, and sometimes his father's, the strange happenings being portents of an uncommon destiny. In Eilhart, he is born soon after his mother dies on the ship carrying his parents back to Cornwall, whereas in Thomas, he comes into the world in a besieged castle four days after his father's death. His mother dies shortly after the birth.

The French prose writer changes the circumstances to include elements of the supernatural. In the prose Tristan and in Malory, Melyodas is kidnapped by an enchantress who loves him. Frantic at his absence, Elyzabeth searches deep into the forest, where labour overcomes her and she gives birth to a child after "many grymly throwys" (372). Realizing that "she had takyn suche colde for the defaute of helpe that the depe draughtys of deth toke hir, that nedys she muste dye and departe oute of thys worlde" (372), she sends a message of love to her husband and then addresses her son:

> 'A, my lytyll son, thou haste murtherd thy modir! And therefore I suppose thou that arte a murtherer so yonge, thow arte full lykly to be a manly man in thyne ayge. . . .' (372)

Merlin later delivers Melyodas from his enchantment. The French prose writer usually suppresses supernatural occurrences; possibly he wanted to accentuate the importance of the birth in this case by extraordinary happenings.[14] Although he follows his source quite closely, Malory adds the prophecy of Tristram's dying mother in order to establish the infant from his earliest hours as a predestined hero.

In no version of the legend is Tristram given divine status, although before the fatal draught he always champions the cause of righteousness in opposition to the forces of evil. In Gottfried, for example, the dragon which Tristram must slay to win Isode "spouts smoke, flames and wind like the devil's child, emits horrible sounds and inhabits the valley of Anferginan, whose name suggests Hell."[15] Although Tristram may not be identified as the son of a god in a direct way, the archetypal battle between good and evil clearly provides a substructure for the story. Both the prose romance and Malory recall Christian allegory in the description of Tristram's first battle with Palomides the Saracen (Lö., 31; 386). Tristram is arrayed in white arms, riding a white horse. He secretly leaves the castle by "a prevy postren" (387) so that he enters the field suddenly with a radiance that Malory describes in an original simile as being like a "bryght angell" (387). Palomides, armed in his usual black, is overcome by the dazzling prowess of the unknown champion, whose superiority is subsequently recognized by all participants. Commenting on a similar episode in the Italian Tavola Ritonda, Joan M. Ferrante writes:

> Perhaps Tristano here represents Christ and Palomides the devil, fighting for the human soul, Isotta. Her beauty attracted the devil, alarming Christ who came to defend her.[16]

Whether or not one wishes to link Tristram with Christ (or perhaps better, with Goodness), vestiges of the heroic archetype are clearly visible in this episode. Identifying the hero's conflict with the enemy as an expression of the cyclical movement of nature, Northrop Frye contends that "the enemy is associated with winter, darkness, confusion, sterility, moribund life and old age, and the hero with spring, dawn, order, fertility, vigor and youth."[17] Significantly, in Malory, Tristram justifies his reluctance to enter the tournament by calling attention to Palomides' age and experience: ". . .for he is a proved knyght and I am but a yonge knyght and late made. . ." (385-86). As Frye points out, all heroes are connected to the mythical pattern of death and rebirth, of light triumphing over darkness. Tristram, like countless other heroes, exemplifies the archetype.

According to Raglan's pattern, at birth an attempt is made to kill the hero, but he is spirited away and reared by foster parents in a far country. Those versions which depict Tristram as orphaned from birth, such as Gottfried's poem, follow this formula almost exactly, except that Tristram is hidden in his own country by his foster parents. In the Middle English Sir Tristrem, the hero is also deprived of his birthright by a usurper, and the revenge of his father's death constitutes an important theme in the poem. This motif is lacking in Malory and his source. However, even though his father is still alive in Malory's version, Tristram is in danger after the death of his mother because the barons assume that Melyodas is dead, and they wish no impediment in taking over the country. He is saved by Elyzabeth's handmaid through her "fayre speche" (372). Later, Tristram is the object of another attempted murder when his stepmother tries on two occasions to poison him. Melyodas' second wife, daughter of King Howell of Brittany, is invented by the author of the prose Tristan to emphasize the insecurity of the young hero in his own court,[18] but Malory exploits the situation to show Tristram's exceptional courtesy.

In a highly dramatic scene, an irate King Melyodas and his barons condemn the evil woman to the fire. Tristram intercedes and saves his stepmother's life:

> 'Sir,' seyde Trystrams, 'as for that, I beseche you of your mercy that ye woll forgyff hir. And as for my parte, God forgyff hir and I do.' (374)

In this episode Malory follows his source. After her rescue, the queen is grateful to be restored to favour with the king, but the prose writer adds: "mais bien sachez qu'il ne l'ama onques puis tant com il faisoit devant, ne point ne s'i fia" (Curtis, 256; Lö., 22). Malory also records the king's disaffection: "But afftir that kynge Mel[yod]as wolde never have ado with hir as at bedde and at bourde" (374-75). The prose Tristan leaves the relationship in this state, and Melyodas is assassinated immediately after this episode. Malory, however, wishing to emphasize Tristram's nobility even as a child, adds a reconciliation between Melyodas and his wife: "But by the meanys of yonge Trystrams he made the kynge and hir accorded" (375).

Bowra states that "the hero is recognized from the start as an extra-ordinary being"[19] who surpasses his fellows in all endeavours. Tristram's remarkable courtesy in forgiving his stepmother prefigures his later behaviour. Without exception he pardons his enemies, treating his opponents with honour and respect. When Palomides treacherously attacks Tristram at the tournament at Lonezep, for example, and later lies about it, he earns a stiff rebuke from Isode. Tristram's courteous rejoinder illustrates his forgiving nature:

> 'No forse,' seyde sir Trystram unto sir Palomydes, 'I woll take youre exscuse, but well I wote ye spared me but a lytyll. But no forse! All ys pardoned as on my party.' (756)

Malory embellishes the actions of the young Tristram to harmonize with his hero's later gentlemanly conduct.

All versions agree in making Governal Tristram's faithful tutor and advisor until Tristram's death. In the "Book of Sir Tristram," Melyodas, afraid of another attempt on his son's life, sends Tristram and Governal to France to learn "the langage and nurture and dedis of armys" (375). At the court in France Tristram is educated in the arts of music and hunting as well as in the martial abilities required by a warrior:

> And so Trystrams lerned to be an harper passyng all other, that there was none suche called in no contrey. And so in harpynge and on instrumentys of musyke in his youthe he applyed him for to lerne. And aftir, as he growed in myght and strength, he laboured in huntynge and in hawkynge--never jantylman more that ever we herde rede of. (375)

Jackson states that in the earlier versions of the legend, reflected in Eilhart's poem, "the boy's training is the standard upbringing of a knight, with a stress on physical prowess."[20] Later poets create a more chivalric hero by including good manners, learning, and training in the arts, with the purely athletic skills required by a knight. In Gottfried, Tristram's artistic abilities almost overpower his knightly prowess. Little is said in the prose Tristan of the youth's education. At the court of King Faramon, Tristram excels at games and knightly skills, but at this point music is not mentioned (Curtis, 263; Lö., 24). Malory appears to be closer to the poetic tradition in establishing a hero who possesses not only might but the courtly graces. From childhood, Tristram's outstanding abilities both as a warrior and as a gentleman are apparent. Commenting on the usual pattern of the hero's childhood, Bowra states: ". . .the hero's career begins early and shows what kind of man he is going to be."[21]

Tristram's musical ability figures in all redactions of the tale.[22] In her chapter which traces Celtic tradition in the Tristram legend, G. S. Loomis draws a parallel between Tristram's musical talents and the importance of the harper in Old Irish literature (287). From classical times through the Middle Ages until well into the eighteenth century, music was considered by philosophers to constitute a fundamental property of the universe. Because of its mathematical regularity and the harmonies created in the combination of various musical intervals, it became representative of moral harmony in man. In his definitive study of medieval aesthetics, Edgar De Bruyne summarizes the prevailing understanding of music: ". . .la musique sonore est le symbole de toute harmonie physique et morale."[23] He later quotes Cassiodore, an eminent medieval philosopher, who maintains that man's moral harmony and his musical ability are inextricably linked:

> 's'il observe la loi de Dieu, si avec un coeur pur il sert d'après les commandements qu'Il a promulgués, s'il mène une vie sainte, il prouve qu'il se laisse conduire par la science de l'harmonie; si, au contraire, il fait le mal, il montre qu'il ne possède pas la musique'. Seul le sage est musicien.[24]

In the medieval universe, music radiated from every creature, and he who understood music remained in harmony with God's creation.[25]

Poets are not philosophers, to be sure, but philosophical concepts inevitably filter down from the works of erudite masters to become the maxims of educated people. Musicians have been highly regarded since the earliest times; they have always been credited with an understanding beyond that of ordinary men. That Tristram's stature as a hero would be enhanced by his musical talents was evidently clear to the earliest redactors. It remains one of the few characteristics which have survived intact in Malory's portrayal of the Tristram legend; as in earlier renditions, it lends nobility to Malory's hero.

After seven years at the French court, Malory's Tristram returns to Leonis amidst general rejoicing:

> And than kyng Melyodas had grete joy of yonge Trystrams, and so had the quene, his wyff, for ever aftir in hir lyff, because sir Trystrams saved hir frome the fyre: she ded never hate hym more aftir, but ever loved hym and gaff hym many grete gyfftys; for every astate loved hym where that he wente. (375)

Here Malory differs from his source, in which Melyodas is assassinated at Mark's instigation when Tristram is twelve (Lö., 23). The stepmother continues her persecution and Governal flees with his charge to France, where Tristram is renowned for his bravery and beauty (Lö., 24). He does not return to his father's court but travels directly from France to Cornwall. These significant changes not only provide Tristram with a happy family life and a good relationship with his father, but increase his stature as a hero by showing that all who come in contact with him recognize his nobility and love him for his many virtues. As Bowra explains, the hero "awakes admiration primarily because he has in rich abundance qualities which other men have to a much less extent."[26] In Malory, Tristram's physical appearance, prowess and noble character generate universal esteem.

Raglan next deals with the first action of the typical hero's adult life. Little is told of the hero's childhood, but on reaching manhood he returns or goes to his future kingdom and triumphs over a giant, dragon or wild beast. Once again, Tristram fits the heroic pattern almost perfectly. In fact, he vanquishes not one but two major enemies. Whether he returns home to Leonis after his education in France or whether he journeys directly to Cornwall, Tristram's first test as a young hero in most versions of the legend is his battle with

The Morholt.[27] The poems all mention Morholt's superhuman strength, but descriptions of his fierceness vary. Eilhart credits him with the might of four men, yet The Morholt recognizes Tristram's courage and offers him friendship and half of his possessions if Tristram gives up the battle.[28] Gottfried, too, mentions Morholt's four-fold strength, but Tristram balances his adversary with God, Right, and Willing Heart on his side. Gottfried links Morholt with the devil, thereby maintaining the infernal nature of all Tristram's opponents. Although Gottfried's Morholt is fiercer than Eilhart's, he too shows respect for Tristram's courage and youth.[29] In his study of Gottfried's poem, Jackson states that The Morholt was "undoubtedly a monster in earlier versions,"[30] and Gertrude Loomis suggests that he was originally a flesh-eating giant, exacting a tribute of children:

> There are indications. . .in the account of the voyage for healing made by Tristan after he has been wounded by the Morholt, that the person from whom Tristan received the poisoned wound was originally a supernatural being, very recently rationalized by the redactors into an Irish champion, the uncle of Isolt. We are therefore inclined to recognize in the Morholt tribute, in spite of the conventional chivalric features which it presents in the extant texts, the survival of a tradition of considerable antiquity.[31]

Even though Tristram as a young hero faces a flesh and blood knight in surviving versions of the story, he had likely challenged a supernatural monster in the original tales. He therefore fulfills Raglan's observation that the hero usually meets and vanquishes a fearsome adversary.

In the French prose romance, as in Malory, The Morholt becomes Sir Marhalt, one of the "famuste knyghtes of the worlde" (376). Although in the prose Tristan Marhalt arrives in the company of knights of both Ireland and Logres, notably Sir Gaherys (Lö., 28), no mention is made at this time of his status as knight of the Round Table.[32] Malory, however, reminds the reader five times during the episode that Marhalt is one of Arthur's noble knights (376-82). In a passage entirely original to Malory,[33] Mark and his barons even consider soliciting Launcelot as a champion but conclude that

> . . .hit was laboure in vayne bycause sir Marhalte was a knyght of Rounde Table; therefore ony of hem wolde be loth to have ado with other, but yf hit were so that ony knyght at his owne rekeyste wolde fyght disgysed and unknowyn. (377)

Malory particularly emphasizes Marhalt's position as a knight of the Round Table and accentuates his standing as a noble and valiant warrior. He is first introduced as "the good knyght that was nobly proved" (376; my emphasis). Like a hero, he eagerly accepts King Angwysh's commission to fight in Cornwall for Ireland's rightful tribute: "And for to avaunce my dedis and to encrece my worshyp I woll ryght gladly go unto this journey" (376). King Mark laments Marhalt's arrival, because the Irish champion's fame as a noble knight has preceded him: ". . .than made kynge Marke grete sorow, whan he undirstood that the good knyght sir Marhalt was com; for they knew no knyght that durste have ado with hym" (376). Malory emphasizes Marhalt's invincibility through repetition: in the next twenty lines he draws attention three more times to Mark's failure to produce a champion who will dare to meet the mighty opponent. Although the prose Tristan describes Marhalt's prowess, Malory augments the description through repetition and by showing Marhalt's noble desire to increase his own worship.

In all versions, Marhalt refuses to encounter a champion of common blood. Adding to his source, Malory indicates Marhalt's satisfaction when he learns of Tristram's royal ancestry: "Than was sir Marhalte gladde and blyeth that he sholde feyght with suche a jantylman" (379). The delight is entirely mutual. Tristram shows great courtesy to his worthy adversary, addressing him as "fayre knyght" and acknowledging him as "one of the moste renomed knyghtes of the worlde" (381). He continues, drawing attention to the importance of his first test as knight and hero: "'And sytthen I toke the Order of Knyghthode this day, I am ryght well pleased, and to me moste worshyp, that I may have ado wyth suche a knyght as thou arte'" (381). In the prose romance, as in the poetic tradition, Marhalt offers Tristram friendship in a patronizing manner:

> 'Por ce te di je que ce ceste bataille veus lessier que tu as enpris par enfance et par folie, je te pardonerai mon maltalent, et te retendrai avec moi, et te ferai mon compaignon.' (Curtis, 299; see also Lö., 28)

Tristram does not compliment his opponent's prowess or indicate his pleasure that his career should be initiated by fighting such a worthy knight. He merely refuses the offer and calls for the contest to begin. Malory's Tristram is not only powerful in military matters, as befits a hero, but he demonstrates his chivalry by his courteous and respectful attitude to his worthy opponent.

In much the same way that the supernatural adversaries of ancient heroes were shown to be virtually invincible, Malory depicts Sir Marhalt as a dangerous enemy with a long history of conquests over able opponents, a device which emphasizes the strength and courage of the young Tristram. But Malory does more. He shows Marhalt not only to be a mighty knight but a noble one as well. Unlike Gottfried, he does not link Marhalt to the devil--quite the opposite, in fact. Malory increases Tristram's accomplishments by providing him with a capable, courteous and honourable antagonist. Marhalt even fights for what he believes to be a just cause. King Angwysh entreats Marhalt "for my sake to do batayle for oure trwayge that we of ryght ought to have" (376). Gottfried makes much of Ireland's legal claims as opposed to the righteous justice embodied in Tristram's cause. Malory does not develop this point, although there can be no doubt that Marhalt is legally entitled to demand satisfaction by tribute or by battle. His challenge never appears to be dishonourable.[34] Because more worship is gained in the defeat of a worthy adversary, Tristram's status as a hero clearly gains honour by virtue of Sir Marhalt's nobility. Tristram's courteous treatment of his opponent, furthermore, illustrates his position as a "kynde and jantyll" knight (763).

The young hero in the Tristram legend overcomes two dangerous adversaries. The first is changed in twelfth-century redactions from a monster to a powerful knight, but the second retains its supernatural form, in the poetic tradition, at least. On the quest for King Mark's bride, by chance[35] or design,[36] Tristram encounters a loathsome dragon which has been laying waste the Irish countryside. Of course, the reward for slaying the beast is marriage to the king's daughter. In keeping with the prose writer's tendency to reject from his version most of the elements of Celtic myth and magic, the prose redactions transform the battle with the dragon into a judicial combat involving Isode's father. Just as the flesh-eating giant of Celtic story becomes the human Marhalt, so the vicious dragon becomes the knightly Sir Blamoure, a relative of Launcelot.[37] Vinaver comments,

> The whole evolution of the Tristram story from a primitive tale to a romance of chivalry is reflected in the contrast between the epic fight with the dragon and the conventional romantic duel.[38]

Malory emphasizes Marhalt's exceptional honour and prowess, linking them to his noble lineage. Similarly, he highlights Blamoure's royal origins as one of Launcelot's cousins in order to accentuate the martial ability of Tristram's opponents. King Angwysh is impressed by Blamoure's heritage:

> 'As for sir Launcelot, he is called the noblyst of the worlde of knyghtes, and wete you well that the knyghtes of hys bloode ar noble men and drede shame.' (408)

The French source makes no mention of Blamoure's hereditary valour (Curtis, 208-09; Lö., 36), nor, as in Malory, is Blamoure's prowess praised directly:

> '. . .thes that ar comyn of kynge Banys bloode, as sir Launcelot and thes othir, ar passynge good harde knyghtes and harde men for to wynne in batayle as ony that I know now lyvyng.' (407)

In a speech entirely original to Malory, Bleoberys exhorts his brother, Blamoure, to exemplify their family's famed courage and hardiness:

> 'Fayre dere brother,' seyde he, 'remembir of what kynne we be com of, and what a man is sir Launcelot de Lake, nother farther ne nere but brethyrne chyldirne. And there was never none of oure kynne that ever was shamed in batayle, but rathir, brothir, suffir deth than to be shamed!' (408)

These speeches and descriptions serve the important purpose of establishing Tristram's challenger as honourable, noble and worthy of a hero's attention. The glory of victory increases significantly when the foe exemplifies power and honour. Malory skillfully dramatizes the episode he finds in his source to emphasize Tristram's heroic prowess.

According to Raglan, the hero, having defeated some supernatural opponent, marries a princess and becomes king. In the poetic tradition, Tristram wins the princess by vanquishing the dragon. Isode, however, intensely dislikes the young man whom she has just identified as the slayer of her uncle. Only fear of marriage to an odious seneschal, who attempts to take credit for the dragon's death, causes her to accept Tristram. In Eilhart's version, Tristram refuses Isode's hand, saying that he is too young to marry, and the king agrees, fearing that Isode will never forgive the man who killed her uncle. Gottfried provides no explanation for Tristram's refusal but shows both Isode's relief at the news that she will not be forced to marry either the seneschal or Tristram and her excitement about becoming a queen.[39] Tristram remains true to the model of the typical hero in winning the princess, but he does not marry her in any version of the legend because his ancient position as lover of his uncle's wife forces a variation from the usual pattern as described by Raglan.

In the prose Tristan and in Malory, Tristram requests Isode as a wife for Mark in return for his services to Angwysh in the judicial battle with Blamoure. Tristram's culpability in the slaying of Marhalt had been recognized much earlier, at the end of his first visit to Ireland, and Isode is not moved to hatred, as in the poems. Malory describes the queen's anger upon finding that the piece of the sword removed from Marhalt's fatal wound fits Tristram's sword perfectly. He then comments on Isode's discomfort:

> Whan Isode herde her sey so she was passynge sore abaysshed, for passynge well she loved Tramtryste and full well she knew the crewelnesse of hir modir the quene. (389)

The prose source makes no mention of Isode's sentiments. The king hesitates for a moment and then allows Tristram his liberty, threatening him with death should he return to Ireland (Curtis, 352; Lθ., 33). In Malory, King Angwysh is far more gracious. Tristram explains his actions: "'I dud the batayle for the love of myne uncle kynge Marke and for the love of the contrey of Cornwayle, and for to encrece myne noure'" (391). Recognizing Tristram's nobility, Angwysh exclaims,

> 'So God me help! . . .I may nat sey but ye dud as a knyght sholde do and as hit was youre parte to do for your quarell, and to encrece your worshyp as a knyght sholde do.' (391)

Though Tristram must leave the Irish court because of the queen's enmity, he remains on excellent terms with both father and daughter.

When Tristram later meets Angwysh on the English coast, the reader is not surprised that the two greet each other enthusiastically:

> And whan sir Trystrames saw the kynge he ran unto hym and wolde have holden his styrope, but the kynge lepe frome his horse lyghtly, and eythir halsed othir in armys. (406-07)

The warmth and spontaneity of Malory's description is not present in his source. The prose writer narrates:

> Cele nuit jut li rois sor la marine, mout liez et mout joianz de ce qu'il avoit trové Tristan qui por li a enprise la bataille, car mout ce fioit en la proesce Tristan.
> (Curtis, 418; Lθ., 36)

By delineating a natural affection between the king and Tristram, and by adding allusions to Isode's romantic interest, Malory increases Tristram's heroic stature. Bowra explains that the true hero possesses a charisma which draws others to him and which elicits admiration and affection: "The power which heroes display in action can be felt in their mere presence. When they appear, other men know them for superior beings. . . ."[40] Even in the court of his enemies, Tristram is well liked and admired. His second test as a hero ends like his first, in triumph and friendship.

When Tristram asks for Isode as Mark's bride, King Angwysh becomes disconsolate: "'Alas! seyde the kynge, 'I had lever than all the londe that I have that ye wolde have wedded hir yourself'" (411). Tristram replies, drawing attention to his knightly honour: "'Sir, and I dud so, I were shamed for ever in this worlde and false of my promyse'" (411). The prose romance relates Angwysh's dream of Isode's unhappy marriage, but the king does not express his desire that Tristram marry her himself. However, Tristram has difficulty requesting her hand for his uncle "car son amour s'est réveillé dès qu'il est revenu auprès d'elle; mais le sentiment de la loyauté l'emporte" (Lö., 38). Malory's hero does not hesitate but immediately fears the shame inherent in breaking a promise to his liege lord. By showing Tristram's unwavering nobility and by dramatizing the respect in which Angwysh holds him, Malory increases the reader's appreciation of Tristram's heroic qualities.

Having won the princess, Raglan's typical hero becomes king and reigns uneventfully for a time, often prescribing a code of law. Later he loses favour with his subjects or with the gods and is driven into exile. The structure of the ancient legend precludes Tristram's ascension to any throne, though he qualifies for three: his father's realm of Leonis, King Mark's dominion in Cornwall and, of course, the Irish crown. He must remain the lover of his uncle's wife, bound in fealty to Mark and in passion to Isode. However, given this deviation from Raglan's pattern, Tristram's career parallels the typical model remarkably.

With Mark's bride he returns to Cornwall where he enjoys the king's favour and indulges his passion for Isode. Although Tristram does not establish a legal code,[41] throughout his life he is recognized as the greatest huntsman, and Malory makes him the originator of hunting terminology. In spite of Malory's reference to the authority of the "booke," Tristram's role as creator of hunting law does not occur in the French romance[42]:

> And as the booke seyth, he began good mesures of blowynge of beestes of venery and beestes of chaace and all maner of vermaynes, and all the termys we have yet of hawkynge and huntynge. (375)

Later, Malory reiterates Tristram's importance in establishing procedures of the hunt:

> For, as bookis reporte, of sir Trystram cam all the good termys of venery and of huntynge, and all the syses and mesures of all blowyng wyth an horne; and of hym we had fyrst all the termys of hawkynge, and whyche were bestis of chace and bestis of venery, and whyche were vermyns; and all the blastis that longed to all maner of game: fyrste to the uncoupelynge, to the sekynge, to the fyndynge, to the rechace, to the flyght, to the deth, and to strake; and many other blastis and termys. . . . (682)

After both of these passages the narrator intrudes, exhorting gentlemen everywhere to honour Sir Trystram for his great contributions to the noble art of the hunt.

Malory states that by knowledge of correct hunting etiquette gentlemen may be separated from those lower in social rank: ". . .all men of worshyp may discever a jantylman frome a yoman and a yoman frome a vylayne" (375). The ritual of the hunt, as described in hunting handbooks which abounded in the Middle Ages, required great training and exactitude. Each phase, from the initial stalking of the quarry to the final disposition of the carcass demanded precise nomenclature and clear, unambiguous notes of the hunting horn. Even the hounds used for the chase were to be addressed in a particular manner.[44] The master huntsman was, of necessity, a highly trained and educated individual.

Not only remarkable prowess in military matters but superior ability in gentlemanly pastimes was required of the hero of romance. In Malory, Tristram becomes the ideal for others to emulate: he is well born, beautiful in his person, artistically sensitive and so well accustomed to the gentleman's passion for hunting that he is capable of classifying and codifying all aspects of the sport. Particularly significant is the relationship between the greatest lover and the greatest hunter. Marcelle Thiébaux shows how Tristram the great hunter becomes himself the quarry in the love chase. According to Thiébaux, the hunt as a metaphor for love was well developed in the Middle Ages.[45] It seems entirely fitting, therefore, that Tristram, both as hunter and hunted, should excel in love and in hunting.

The poetic tradition firmly establishes Tristram as Master of the Hunt. In Gottfried's poem, Tristram encounters Mark's huntsmen about to dispose of the carcass of a deer which they had just brought to earth. A stranger in their country, and just a boy, Tristram earns their admiration and respect by instructing them in the most current rituals of the hunt.[46] Similarly, in the Middle English Sir Tristrem he teaches the huntsmen how to butcher their quarry correctly and informs them when to sound certain hunting calls on the horn.[47] Like Gottfried's courtiers, they are delighted and amazed. Earlier, the poet exclaims that Tristram knew more about hunting than Manerius, the hero of a

Latin poem, renowned for his hunting exploits: "More he couþe of veneri/þan couþe manerious."[48] In Eilhart's poem, Tristram and Isode survive their exile in an inhospitable forest because of the hero's hunting expertise. Tristram is the first to bend a fishing hook and to hunt with hounds: "It is said that Tristan was the first to take fish by angling, and that he was the first to put hounds on the scent of game."[49]

Although Tristram does not, like Raglan's model hero, become king and leave a canon of laws to assure his immortality, he is remembered for his legendary influence on the noble pursuit of game. That his memory should endure is eloquently expressed in the narrator's words from Malory's "Book of Tristram": ". . .that all maner jantylmen hath cause to the worldes ende to prayse sir Trystram and to pray for his soule" (683).[50] Malory's source follows the poetic tradition in establishing Tristram as a peerless hunter: "personne au monde n'est meilleur chasseur que lui" (Lö., 355). Vinaver points out that Tristram's role as originator of the terms of hunting is mostly Malory's invention:

> All that [the source] has to say is that Tristram knew 'tant des eschez et des tables que nul ne l'en peust mater, et de l'escremie plus que nul. Et chevauchoit si bien que nul plus' (MS. B. N. fr 103, f. 30^v, col. 2).[51]

Malory accentuates Tristram's mastery of hunting to ennoble his hero; Tristram not only excels at the performance but legislates rules of conduct.

Raglan's pattern for the typical hero calls for a relatively uneventful period in the hero's life, where the status quo is maintained.

For a time after Mark and Isode are wed, Tristram enjoys such a respite. In the poetic tradition, driven by irresistible passion, Tristram resorts to trickery and deceit to be with Isode. Jackson comments that most versions "delight in the multiplication of examples in which the lovers deceive or attempt to deceive Mark."[52] Tristram's quick wits and ability to dissemble save the day on more than one occasion. He disguises himself, in various versions of the tale, as a leper, a fool, a pilgrim and a minstrel. He alerts Isode to his presence through a number of cunning messages and frequently swears to the literal interpretation of an incident while turning his back on the truth.

The hero as a trickster is common in epic poetry. Bowra states that

> . . .since wits are another sign that [the hero] surpasses other men, there is nothing discreditable in their use. . . . since the hero's chief aim is to exert his own will and get what he wants there is no reason why he should not use guile.[53]

Bowra then cites the example of the wounded hero who turns and kills his opponent's horse while his opponent chivalrously tends to the hero's wounds. "This is not fair play, but is accepted on the principle that all is permissible in war."[54] Likewise, all is permissible in love. The popularity of the Tristram romance in its time and the many artistic representations of Tristram's meeting with Isode under a tree, with Mark hidden high in the branches, attest to the admiration inspired by the lovers' cunning. Newstead comments:

> The modern reader, schooled to appreciate the legend of Tristram and Isolt as a tale of tragic and overwhelming passion, may be startled to realize that the episode most familiar to the medieval public was no moment of exalted romance but rather a scene of audaciously successful deception. . . .No episode in the matière de Bretagne is more

> often represented in medieval art. . . .The written sources, too, are marked by a diversity of detail that confirms the iconographic evidence of popular taste for the episode.[55]

Vestiges of Tristram the trickster remain in the French prose romance, but Malory omits or changes every instance of his trickery. In the series of events leading to the lovers' sojourn in the forest, Andret waits and watches until one night he "secretly and suddeynly" surprises Tristram in Isode's bed (431). In the prose Tristan, Andret circles Isode's bed with sharp blades. Tristram is wounded in the thigh, significantly, and leaves bloodstains on the sheet. Isode quickly wounds herself and then accuses her guards, Tristram and Andret, of attempting to kill her. Andret's plan is thus confounded. Malory omits this entire incident, proceeding directly to Andret's next, successful attempt to discover the lovers in a compromising situation.[56] Immediately prior to this episode, Isode is found guilty of infidelity because of the enchanted horn. Sent by Morgan le Fay to Camelot in order to embarrass Gwenevere, the horn is redirected by Lamerok to the Cornish court, where Isode and the majority of her ladies fail to drink cleanly and are therefore indicted for adultery. In the prose Tristan, Isode protests her innocence and offers to clear her name by means of a judicial battle. Mark refuses, knowing that none of his knights can withstand Tristram. The affair rests there, as Mark and his barons decide that the test was ignoble (Lö., 47). Malory subtly changes the incident to clear Tristram of any connection with half-truths. Having failed the test, Isode and most of the ladies of the court are condemned to die. The barons rise en masse and say that they will "'nat have tho ladyes brente for an horne made by sorsery that cam 'frome the false sorseres and wycche moste that is now lyvyng'" (430). The blame is shifted to Morgan, no statement of innocence is made by Isode, and Tristram is left out of the whole unsavoury business. By suppressing any suggestion of trickery in passages such as these, Malory maintains Tristram's nobility. At no point in the "Book of Tristram" does Tristram willfully resort to subterfuge in order to see Isode. Ancient heroes may have been admired for their guile and cunning, but courtly heroes play by different rules. In Malory, Tristram has access to Isode because he is worthy, not because he can dupe her husband.

For the typical hero, the period of contentment and stability must come to an end, and he is driven from his country by hostile forces, whether human or supernatural. In his psychological study of the hero, Joseph Campbell identifies the myths of exile and return as the most significant unifying aspect of all hero stories.[57] Tristram faces exile at least three times in most versions of the legend. He is exiled from his homeland as an infant or young child because of a hostile usurper or, in the prose tradition, an evil stepmother. He usually returns in triumph. In the Middle English Sir Tristrem he returns to his father's country and kills the traitorous Duke Morgan:

> Þus haþ tristrem þe swete
> Yslawe þe douke morgan.
> No wold he never lete
> Til mo castels wer tan
> . . . .
> He slouȝ his fader ban,
> Al bowed to his hand.[58]

Like the Middle English poet, Gottfried cites Thomas as a source, and he reports Tristram's revenge on the evil Morgan as well.

No usurper appears in Eilhart's version; Rivalen merely sends the young hero on an educative journey. Like Eilhart, the prose writer keeps Tristram's father alive, although he changes the name to Melyodas. He invents Melyodas' second wife and attributes Tristram's exile to her plots upon his life. Tristram does not return to Leonis after his father's death planned by the evil King Mark (Lö., 23). Malory changes the circumstances of Tristram's first exile. Tristram's father, still living, sends the boy away for his own safety. Years later he returns, much to the joy of both his parents, and he travels to Cornwall with his father's blessing (378).

When Mark becomes convinced of Tristram's adultery with Isode, Tristram's second exile begins. Eilhart describes how Tristram accompanied by Isode lives in hardship and privation. However, the lovers do not notice their predicament because of their overwhelming passion for one another.[59] Gottfried's king banishes the lovers because he cannot bear their transparent affection for one another. They live in a grotto of love, where their passion alone sustains them.[60] In both cases, Mark finds the lovers sleeping with an unsheathed sword between them. Taking the sword as proof of their innocence, he welcomes Isode back to court but insists that Tristram leave because of the temptation he presents. Like Eilhart's version, the prose romance begins the lovers' banishment with their impending punishment for adultery. Unlike the fugitives in Eilhart's poem, they escape into the forest where they live in great comfort in a house once occupied by a knight and his lady (Lö., 52). Mark later recaptures Isode, securing her in a high tower. Following his French source throughout, Malory sends his hero to

Brittany on another search for healing. Here he meets and eventually marries Isode White Hands, daughter of King Howell of Brittany.

The third exile in the poems sends Tristram away from Isode permanently. Although he returns in many guises to the court, he never again lives in Cornwall. Gottfried's emphasis at this point is on Tristram's learning to live without Isode; he returns to her only three times. Unlike Gottfried's Tristram, Eilhart's hero resorts to increased instances of deceit. In Malory, as in the French romance, Tristram is banished twice more. Having received treatment in Brittany for a poisoned wound, Tristram eventually returns to Cornwall in secret. Discovering his presence, Mark yet again drives him out of Cornwall. Finally, Mark imprisons him, but he escapes with Isode's aid to live a happy and unconstrained life at Launcelot's castle, Joyous Gard. Malory leaves the lovers here, contentedly united at the end of the "Book of Sir Tristram." The motif of exile and return provides the main structure of the hero's story, and even though the narrative is far more complex in the prose redactions than in the poetic tradition, Tristram's life in all versions deals with repeated banishment and eventual resolution.

By the omission of small details found in his source, Malory ennobles Tristram's character throughout the series of events dealing with exile and return. For example, in the prose romance Tristram repeatedly begs Isode to leave her husband and to flee with him. After he rescues her from Palomides, he pleads with her to leave Mark:

> Tristan propose à Iseut d'aller ensemble en Logres, mais elle préfère différer cette déloyauté envers le roi Marc aussi longtemps que possible. (Lö., 44)

She warns Tristram that he will be called a traitor and that she will be known as a "roïne foli et deleal." She suggests that they return to Mark and continue their intrigues as previously (Curtis, 512). However, the lovers first remain together for two days: "Tristans remaint leanz deus jorz, et se deduist avec la roïne tant come li plest" (Curtis, 512). When they return, Mark greets them with envy, suspicion and fear that Tristram's prowess and popularity will depose him.[61]

Malory alters both the attitude of the lovers and of the king. Tristram does not suggest that Isode accompany him to Logres; in fact, no mention is made of their relationship at all. Tristram behaves as an honourable knight in service of his lady whom he may well love "synles," as Percival later implies (679). Malory does not provide the lovers with a two-day idyll: ". . .and sir Trystrames toke the quene and brought her agayne unto kynge Marke" (425-26). The reception in Cornwall is joyful, and Malory implies that Mark, too, delighted in the safe return of his wife and nephew: "And than was there made grete joy of hir home-commynge. Than who was cheryshed but sir Trystrames! . . .And thus they lyved with joy and play a longe whyle" (426). This pleasant life is disrupted by Andret, who alerts Mark to a conversation between Tristram and Isode, and Tristram escapes to the forest in the first of his separations from Isode. In the French romance, he again begs his mistress to accompany him:

> Il demande à Iseut si elle veut s'enfuir avec lui, mais elle lui dit de s'en aller et de ne rien craindre pour elle, qui est protégée par le grand amour de roi. (Lö., 45)

Once again, Malory suppresses Tristram's request and shows Mark's genuine joy at his later reconciliation with his nephew.

In Malory, Tristram finally asks Isode to escape with him to Arthur's court only when Mark has demonstrated utter perfidy and debasement. Before this time, Tristram is far too honourable to compromise himself and his lady. Andret will eventually discover the lovers "nakyd a-bed" (431), but at this point in Malory's narrative there is nothing to suggest more than the honourable love of a noble knight for his chosen lady. As Malory later states,

> For men and women coude love togydirs seven yerys, and no lycoures lustis was betwyxte them, and than was love trouthe and faythefulnes. And so in lyke wyse was used such love in kynge Arthürs dayes.[62] (1120)

The typical hero's exile is precipitated by forces human or supernatural, and Tristram's is no exception. Mark is the immediate agent of Tristram's banishment from Cornwall, but supernatural forces also figure in the story, especially in the poetic tradition. Tristram is tragically doomed to unsanctioned love by forces beyond his control. The love potion prepared by Isode's mother for Mark and his bride on their wedding night becomes the elixir of both love and death for Tristram and Isode. Gottfried describes the contents of the flask: "It was their lasting sorrow, their never-ending anguish, of which at last they died!"[63] Eilhart remarks, "Little did Tristan know, as he took it, what an ill-starred drink it was."[64] Even the prose Tristan, where the magic potion is "not a vital force in the same way as it is in Béroul or Thomas,"[65] draws attention to the link between their love and death: "Diex, quel duel! Il ont beü lor destrucion et lor mort" (Curtis, 445).

The love potion in the poems, whether it has a limited span of effectiveness as in Eilhart, or whether it lasts a lifetime as in

Thomas, is a force "beyond the control of the characters, which leads them into a relationship which the poet condemns."[66] Even Gottfried in his penetrating analysis of the psychology of love treats the passion between Tristram and Isode as altogether evil.[67] The lovers are excused only partially because of their powerlessness to work against the effects of the potion. When the four-year time expires, their acts become worthy of total condemnation. In the prose romance the potion is administered and then almost forgotten, although the prose writer initially links the philtre to the lovers' deaths. However, as Curtis observes in her study of the prose Tristan, "we never really have the feeling that death is inherent in the relationship of Tristan and Iseut."[68] Tristram is not driven to fulfill his fatal passion in the same way that the poets describe. In the poems, Tristram is a tragic hero, the tragedy consisting of an honourable man reduced to dishonour because of external forces. No similar degradation occurs in the prose romance, where Tristram's claims to Isode result from his worthiness as opposed to the unworthiness of her husband.

Malory reduces the love potion to a very minor position. He amplifies the suggestion found in the prose Tristan that the hero and Isode already love each other and shows the philtre only as the catalyst which sweeps away inhibitions. Immediately after Isode heals Tristram of the venomous wound inflicted by Marhalt, Malory comments,

> And therefore sir Tramtryste kyste grete love to La Beale Isode, for she was at that tyme the fayrest lady and maydyn of the worlde. And. . .she began to have a grete fantasy unto hym. (385)

In the French source, the prose writer not only omits any mention of growing affection, but comments that Tristram, constantly fearing recognition in the court of his enemy, yearns to return as quickly as possible to Cornwall (Lö., 29). He remains in Ireland, however, because of a tournament. Only the rivalry prompted by Palomide's love for Isode causes Tristram to consider her as a mistress:

> Palamède se prend aussitôt d'un vif amour pour Iseut; Tristan, qui jusque-là n'avait guère éprouvé de sentiments pour elle, s'éprend sérieusement en voyant l'amour de Palamède.
> (Lö., 30)

In spite of Tristram's growing admiration, the Isode of the French romance remains indifferent:

> Le roi voit d'un oeil favorable l'amour de Tristan pour sa fille, mais Iseut, trop jeune encore pour sentir l'amour, n'aime ni ne hait le vainqueur de Palamède. (Lö., 32)

In contrast, Malory explains Isode's reluctance even to seek vengeance for her uncle's death by explaining that she loved Tristram "passynge well" (389). Malory emphasizes the young couple's affection by having them exchange rings at their parting, whereas the French source makes no mention of their farewells. Malory shows that Tristram and Isode are in love long before the sea voyage to Cornwall. Ignoring any mention of the love potion's fatal consequences, Malory writes that

> . . .they lowghe and made good chere and eyther dranke to other frely . . . .But by that drynke was in their bodyes they loved aythir other so well that never hir love departed, for well nother for woo. (412)

The magic elixir of early legend is very much diminished in Malory, but vestiges of the link between the hero and the supernatural remain.

Some kind of divine vengeance leads the hero of myth to his death, as Raglan observes, often at the top of a hill. The hero's body is not buried, but is provided with one or more holy sepulchres. As has already been discussed, in the poetic tradition Tristram dies on a cliff overlooking the sea because of his wife's jealousy and malice. His body is buried, but mysteriously vines from his grave and Isode's intertwine, marking the site as a shrine to love. Clearly, Tristram's death fits the heroic mold as closely as does his life.

Because the aims of the prose romance and of Malory are so different from those of the poetic tradition, the changed ending should not surprise the reader. Malory, especially, is interested in Tristram as a noble knight of prowess, the epitome of chivalry. He never shows his hero as tragically fated to die for an illicit and irresistible obsession. His death at the hands of Mark, who is more villified for his cowardice and dishonesty than for his opposition to the love affair, is tragic by chivalric standards. The great knight wishes to die honourably in battle, as expressed by champions such as Blamoure, who cries, "I had lever dye here with worshyp than lyve with shame" (409). Like the heroes of old, Malory's knights desire death in a glorious cause. Bowra comments, "It is somehow right that great warriors should die, as they have lived, in battle."[69] Mark robs Tristram of this honour, however, and therein lies the tragedy for Malory.

The diction used in reporting Tristram's death recalls the polarity between Tristram's chivalric honour and Mark's cowardice: "Also that *traytoure* kynge slew the *noble* knyght sir Trystram as he sate harpynge afore hys lady, La Beall Isode, with a trenchaunte glayve" (1149; emphasis mine). Malory's choice of words leaves no doubt that the reader, like the author, is to be shocked and horrified at Mark's craven behaviour. Using a sharp spear which is more deadly than the sword with which an honourable knight confronts an adversary, Mark kills the unarmed and unsuspecting hero. Medieval illustrations frequently depict hunters on foot, armed with spears.[70] In addition, Malory's knights are usually armed with a lance and a sword, but the spear is rarely mentioned. Through the spear's connection with the hunt, Tristram is linked to venery even in his death. Where he had formerly been love's quarry, he now becomes Mark's.

In the French source, the circumstances surrounding Tristram's death are told in great detail over several pages. Mark mortally wounds the hero with a poisoned spear provided by Morgan La Fée. Tristram suffers greatly for a number of days, but the physicians can do nothing to cure him. He finally dies, strangling Isode in his last embrace (Lö., 546-49).[71] Malory condenses the account he found in the prose Tristan for a number of reasons. The overall structure of the Morte Darthur works slowly but definitely to Arthur's final battle and tragic death. A long discussion of Tristram's last days would detract from Malory's main interest and would render Arthur's death somewhat anticlimactic. Malory is more concerned with Tristram's heroic career than with his tragic death. For this reason, the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" concludes joyfully. Tristram's death is reported later in the narrative, and even then, it is not dramatized as in the French romance.

There remains another reason for Malory's compression and apparent indifference to the details of Tristram's murder, however. Malory is emotionally involved with his hero, as Benson explains: "Tristram is, even more than Lancelot has yet been shown to be, Malory's ideal gentleman. . . ."[72] In original passages, Malory sympathetically describes Tristram's imprisonment (540) and exhorts his readers to pray for Tristram's soul (683). The author is revolted by Tristram's shameful death and cannot bring himself to recreate the death scene. In fact, it is related by the narrator after the fact and linked to the outrageous attack on the noble Sir Lamerok. The narrator comments on the effect of Tristram's murder:

> . . .for whos dethe was the moste waylynge of ony knyght that ever was in Kynge Arthurs dayes, for there was never none so bewayled as was sir Tristram and sir Lamerok, for they were with treson slayne. . . . (1149)

The link with Lamerok's death is original to Malory. He draws upon the shock and disgust expressed by the Arthurian world when confronted with Lamerok's death to emphasize the sorrow felt for Tristram's untimely end. In both cases, death itself is not a cause for grief, but it is the manner of death that elicits general mourning. Noble to the end, Tristram does not kill Isode in Malory's version; rather, she dies of sorrow, swooning on his grave.

The death of an honourable knight must be avenged, however, according to Malory's chivalric morality. Thus he wastes no time in assuring his reader that

> . . .sir Bellynger revenged the deth of hys fadir, sir Alysaundir, and sir Trystram, for he slew kynge Marke. . . . And all that were with kynge Marke whych were of assente of the dethe of sir Trystram were slayne, as sir Andred and many othir. (1150)

No mention of Mark's death occurs in the concluding pages of the prose *Tristan*. In some manuscripts, the repentant king builds a magnificent church to house the lovers' bodies:

> Le roi Marc qui est si 'dolanz qe pou qu'il ne muert de

> douleur,' a fait transporter les deux corps à Tintagel, et dit qu'il les fera enterrer ensemble. (Lö., 550)

In other manuscripts Mark is captured after a battle and exposed on a desert island, where he repents and admits that he deserves death for his heinous crime. Arthur later releases him and sends him back to Cornwall under guard (Lö., 586-608). Neither of these resolutions suits Malory, whose sensibilities were clearly outraged by Tristram's hideous murder. Throughout the Morte Darthur friends and relatives maintain personal and family honour by avenging the deaths of their kin and companions. Sir Bellynger, son of Alexander the Orphan, is second cousin to Tristram and therefore the likely avenger of his murder. The villain suitably punished, Malory's tale of Sir Tristram comes to an end.

In most details concerning Tristram's biography, Malory adheres to the general outline of the legend. By virtue of his birth, career and death, Tristram clearly ranks as a hero in all versions of his story. In addition, Malory stresses Tristram's role as the exemplary knight by emphasizing his honour in every encounter and by endowing him with the gentlemanly talents of music and hunting. Along with military prowess, artistic sensitivity and gentlemanly interests, the hero of romance must have suitable companions, for honour is gained by association with other honourable knights and ladies. Malory shapes and colours Tristram's relationships with the other characters in the romance to highlight the honour of his friends and the shame of his enemies. In his treatment of Tristram's associates, Malory recreates the same pattern of change evident in the details of the hero's life.

By omissions and additions to his source, Malory ennobles his hero and constantly focuses the reader's attention on the pursuit and attainment of honour.

Chapter II

The Hero's Companions: Tristram's Honour by Association

Although Malory's purpose in "The Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" does not extend to an investigation of the psychology of love, the relationship between Tristram, Mark and Isode provides the structure upon which he builds his tale of chivalry. He changes details of Tristram's love for Isode and conflict with Mark in order to accentuate his hero's nobility, for in the Arthurian world, noble knights must associate with honourable companions and oppose the shameful enemies of true knighthood. As T. C. Rumble demonstrates in his discussion of characterization in the "Book of Sir Tristram," Malory transforms the character of Isode from the unattractive heroine of both the poetic tradition and the prose Tristan into a much more sympathetic figure. Rumble concludes that Malory effects this change to provide a logical reason for the enmity between Tristram and Mark, especially since Malory removes most of the supernatural power from the love potion which, in the poetic tradition, is responsible for Tristram and Isode's fatal passion. Malory's Tristram, his eyes unclouded by magic, would hardly find the scheming, cold-hearted Isode of the French romances sufficiently appealing to claim as his life-long love.[1] But Malory has another reason for ameliorating the defects in the original Isode. Early in the tale he establishes Tristram as the epitome of chivalry. Such a hero cannot love a dishonourable lady, and many of Isode's actions in the French prose Tristan are clearly ignoble.[2]

Malory never provides a physical description of La Beall Isode, remaining content to identify her as "the fayrest lady and maydyn of the worlde" (385). Throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram" Malory's knights praise her beauty: Palomides extols her as "'the fayrest quene and lady that ever bare lyff'" (770). In his condemnation of Mark's jealousy, Percival acknowledges Isode's reputation as "'one of the fayrest ladyes of the world'" (679), and Launcelot, with courtly grace, points her out to Arthur, saying, "'yondir rydyth the fayreste lady of the worlde excepte youre quene, dame Gwenyver'" (743). The king displays no such courtesy, proclaiming Isode to be the "'fayrest ever I sawe'" (757). Before he realizes who she is, Dinadan compliments Isode on her beauty: "'I shall sey you be as fayre a lady as evir I sawe ony, and much fayrer than is my lady quene Gwenyver. . .'" (694). Even the knights who report the events of the tournament at Lonezep to the ailing Gwenevere display a disconcerting lack of tact in lauding Isode's virtues:

> 'And as for the quene, she is pyerles of all ladyes; for to speake of her beauté, bounté, and myrthe, and of hir goodness, we sawe never hir macche as far as we have ryddyn and gone.' (764)

Rather than responding in a jealous rage, as might be expected of the volatile Gwenevere, she comments somewhat wistfully, "'A, mercy Jesu! . . .thus seyth all folkys that hath sene her and spokyn with her. God wolde. . .that I had parte of her condycions!'" (764). The knights offer no polite protests but continue with news of Palomides.

The comparison between Isode and Gwenevere is Malory's own invention, as is Gwenevere's admiration; episodes in the French source make no reference to Isode's superior beauty (see Lö., 363, 380-81). Malory contrasts the two ladies in order to differentiate between their morality, beauty being equated with goodness. As Edgar De Bruyne explains in his study of medieval aesthetics, ". . .le bien et le beau s'accompagnent nécessairement."[3] Like their classical ancestors, the philosophers of the medieval period believed that the soul is expressed in the body which it shapes. In an introductory chapter to her condensation and translation of De Bruyne's work, Eileen B. Hennessy cites Wisdom xi.21: "You ordered all things by measure, number, weight." This biblical verse lent authority to the principle that "the harmonies of the outer man correspond to those of the inner man."[4]

In his article on the ideal of beauty in medieval literature, D. S. Brewer demonstrates that by Chaucer's time the standard formula for describing feminine pulchritude had been established.[5] The noble heroine, from classical times onward, possessed certain unvarying attributes. She was golden-haired, radiant, had dark eyebrows and grey eyes well spaced on a rose and white face. Her milk-white body had long arms (slender or plump), small breasts, a tiny waist and short, dainty feet. Her fingers were long and delicate.[6] According to Brewer, by the fourteenth-century the tradition was so well established that "a great poet needed only to touch on an essential detail or two to suggest the whole. . . ."[7] Preferring to have his readers imagine the particulars of Isode's beauty, Malory does not provide even the fact that she is blonde, although this is certainly her traditional colouring.[8] Perhaps he believed that his readers were familiar enough with the model of true beauty to construct their own picture of "the fayrest lady."

In the delineation of Isode's moral virtues expressed, of course, in her physical beauty, Malory goes beyond his source. Tristram's praise of Isode's "beauté and hir goodnesse" (403) causes the vindictive Mark to desire her as his queen. In the prose romance, only the lady's beauty is mentioned (Lö., 35). Gwenevere's knights echo the general acclaim for Isode's virtuous nature, praising her for beauty, bounty, mirth and goodness (764). In addition to overt statements such as these, Malory changes incidents to emphasize Isode's noble character.

Soon after their first meeting, Isode falls in love with Tristram, and he reciprocates, whereas the heroine of the French prose romance remains detached and indifferent. After he is healed of the poisoned wound inflicted by Marhalt, Tristram participates in a tournament, still under the assumed name of Tramtryste. In the French prose romance, King Hanguin, Isode's father, invites Tristram to join him at the tournament, even though the hero is not yet recovered from his wounds. The only reason Tristram has remained in Ireland is to participate in the tournament; therefore, there is no question that he will accept. He arrives late, only to find the tournament delayed for ten days. During this time, he feigns illness but secretly plans to challenge Palomides when the tournament resumes. Because she prefers Tristram to the Saracen, Brangwen, Isode's maid and confidante, provides him with white armour. He wins the day but departs secretly; he is identified several days later because Brangwen leads the king to the hero's white shield (Lö., 29-31).

Malory changes both the motivation and the outcome of this episode. Inspired by her love for Tristram, Isode questions his decision not to enter the tournament:

> 'A Tramtryste!' seyde La Beale Isode, 'why woll ye nat have ado at that turnamente? For well I wote that sir Palomydes woll be there and to do what he may. And therefore, sir Tramtryste, I pray you for to be there, for ellys sir Palomydes ys lyke to wynne the degre.' (385)

He consequently agrees to joust for the sake of his lady. Isode procures fine white armour for her champion, all the while suspecting that he is a knight of great prowess:

> Than had La Beale Isode grete suspeccion unto Tramtryste that he was som man of worshyp preved, and therewith she comforted herselfe and kyste more love unto hym, for well she demed he was som man of worshyp. (387)

Having triumphed at the tournament, Tristram returns to Isode, "and there she made hym grete chere and thanked God of his good spede" (389).

In this passage Malory places Isode at the center of the action. Faced with Tristram's reluctance to joust because of his recent wound, she entreats him to enter the tournament so that Palomides, his rival in love, may not win the prize; she arms her chosen knight, and he joyously returns to her. True to courtly conventions, her love increases because of Tristram's knightly prowess. By emphasizing the spontaneous and natural affection which the lovers hold for one another and by demonstrating Isode's keen concern for Tristram's worship, Malory establishes Isode as a devoted and honourable partner for the hero.

Later in the narrative Isode reiterates her interest in Tristram's worship. When he returns home to Joyous Gard after long adventures, she greets him with news of a tournament to be held at the next Pentecost and relates that Launcelot will be there, having been cured by the Holy Grail of his madness. Like a true hero, Tristram delights in the prospect of glory to be won and instructs her to get ready for the journey. In a speech not found in the French romance, she demurs:

> 'Sir,' seyde dame Isode, 'and hyt please you, I woll nat be there, for thorow me ye bene marked of many good knyghtes, and that causyth you for to have muche more laboure for my sake than nedyth you to have.' (839)

Horrified at her partner's subsequent decision to stay at home she exclaims,

> 'God deffende. . .for than shall I be spokyn of shame amonge all quenys and ladyes of astate; for ye that ar called one of the nobelyste knyghtys of the worlde and a knyght of the Rounde Table, how may ye be myssed at that feste? For what shall be sayde of you amonge all knyghtes? 'A! se how sir Trystram huntyth and hawkyth, and cowryth wythin a castle wyth hys lady, and forsakyth us. Alas!' shall som sey, 'hyt ys pyte that ever he was knyght, or ever he shulde have the the love of a lady.' (839-40)

Tristram's reply shows that he is moved by her interest in his repuation: "'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Trystram unto La Beall Isode, 'hyt ys passyngly well seyde of you and nobely counceyled. And now I well undirstonde that ye love me!'" (840). Isode is obviously thinking of the tournament at Lonezep where he had been exposed to Palomides' malicious schemes, and Tristram immediately understands that although she fears for his person, she will not allow his honour to be compromised.

As Vinaver notes, in the French prose romance Tristram himself brings news of the tournament: "M[alory]'s is the only version of the story in which Isode declines to go to the tournament for fear of causing Tristram muche more laboure; unlike most courtly ladies she is unwilling to let him do too much fighting on her account."[9] Vinaver misses the point, somewhat, for Isode is eager that her lover increase his worship; she does not keep him away from any adventures,[10] but her affection causes her to fear for his safety. Although Isode remains a courtly lady in her admiration of prowess and her disapproval of sloth, her tenderness transcends the convention. By placing Isode at the center of this final episode in the "Book of Sir Tristram," Malory begins and ends his love story focusing on Isode's devotion. The attractiveness of the heroine reflects on the hero, and Tristram's honour is increased by his love for a noble lady.

Malory's determination to ensure that Isode's honour is not questioned is nowhere more apparent than in his omission of the wedding-night episode involving the substitution of Brangwen for her mistress. In the French prose romance and in all other versions of the legend, Isode conceals the loss of her maidenhood by forcing Brangwen to submit to Mark's embraces. Tristram invents an old Irish custom that the lights of the bridal chamber must be extinguished, and Mark is successfully duped into believing that the virginal Brangwen is actually Isode. Later, Isode slips into bed beside her husband, who resumes his attentions without detecting the difference. Fearful that the maid may eventually reveal her secret, Isode later plots her murder. When the assassins return with a story which confirms Brangwen's fidelity, Isode becomes full of remorse and contrition. Brangwen is not killed, however, but is later reunited with her mistress (Lö., 42-43). Jackson aptly labels this episode as "one of the most unpleasant in medieval literature. . . .It is hard to see why Thomas and Gottfried retained the episode unless they wished to throw some light on Isode's behavior by doing so and the light they threw must inevitably be unfavorable."[11] The author of the French prose Tristan attempts to justify Isode's actions by suggesting that Brangwen may come to love Mark and thereby divulge her secret. In addition, Isode reacts strongly to the news of Brangwen's refusal, even in the face of death, to condemn her mistress. In an analysis of Isode's character in the prose romance, Curtis remarks, "Although nothing can of course excuse her action, her genuine repentance in the prose version at least softens our condemnation."[12]

Malory entirely transforms this episode. As Rumble carefully explains in his discussion of characterization in the "Book of Tristram," Malory consciously changes incidents in his source to avoid any suggestion of Isode's culpability.[13] While he retains the attempt on Brangwen's life, he creates two ladies, who "for hate and envye" (419) cause Brangwen to be "bounde honde and foote to a tre" (419). When Isode misses her beloved maid, "wete you well she was ryght hevy as evir any quene myght be, for all erthely women she loved hir beste and moste" (419-20). Malory makes no mention of the wedding night substitution, commenting only that Mark and Isode are "rychely wedded wyth grete nobley. But evir, as the Frenshe booke seyth, sir Trystrames and La Beale Isode loved ever togedyrs" (419). Circumventing the problem raised by adulterous relationships, he questions suppositions of guilt based on incriminating circumstances by explaining that "lycoures lustis" did not exist between noble lovers in Arthur's day, for "than was love trouthe and faythefulnes" (1120). Malory chooses to exploit the possibility of Isode's innocence at the time of her nuptials. In addition, as Rumble points out, Malory removes Brangwen's responsibility in the mistake of the love potion. In the prose romance as in earlier versions, Brangwen serves the fatal drink to the unsuspecting pair. In Malory, however, Tristram finds the flask himself and then shares it with Isode

(412). Therefore Brangwen does not have to diminish her guilt by the demeaning substitution on Isode's wedding night. Malory's significant alteration to his source serves a two-fold purpose. First, the omission of this episode allows Isode's character to remain consistent throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram." In almost every incident Malory effects small changes and omissions which accentuate her nobility while suppressing the shameful treachery and deceit found in the source. Secondly, because Isode emerges as an admirable lady, she becomes a fitting consort for the noble Sir Tristram, whose honour and courtesy eclipse even Sir Launcelot's for a time.

Isode's genuine concern for those about her appears in many minor instances throughout Tristram's adventures. After Tristram's marriage to Isode White Hands, which causes the Irish Isode much grief, she magnanimously invites both the hero and his bride to Cornwall:

> . . .whan La Beall Isode undirstood that he was wedded she sente to hym. . .pyteous lettirs as coude be thought and made, and hir conclusyon was thus, that if hit pleased sir Trystram to com to hir courte and brynge with hym Isode le Blaunche Maynys; and they shulde be kepte als well as herselff. (481)

In the prose Tristan her letters complain that she will die of a broken heart if her lover remains away from her.[14] In another episode entirely original to Malory, she warns Anglydes to escape with her son, Alexander the Orphan, before Mark can murder them (634). At the Tournament at Lonezep she demonstrates her concern for Gareth's wounds: "And than they pulled of his helme, and whan La Beall Isode sawe sir Gareth brused so in the face, she asked hym what ayled hym" (731; cf. no mention in prose Tristan, L8., 378). After Tristram reports his meeting with Dinadan, Isode shows her hospitality: "'Alas, sir,' seyde she, 'why brought ye hym nat wyth you hydir?'" (692). In the French source she makes no comment before Tristram outlines his plan to bring Dinadan to Joyous Gard (Lö., 363). Her continuing interest in her partner's welfare manifests itself once again in her caution that he should not leave the castle without weapons:

> So on a day La Beall Isode seyde unto sir Trystram, 'I mervayle me muche that ye remembir nat yourselff, how ye be here in a straunge contrey, and here be many perelous knyghtes, and well ye wote that kynge Marke is full of treson. And that ye woll ryde thus to chace and to hunte unarmed, ye myght be sone destroyed.' (683)

In the source, however, Tristram decides himself that he should be armed (Lö., 355). Insignificant in themselves, these changes create a pattern that transforms Isode's character. No longer the self-centered, scheming and demanding heroine of the French tradition,[15] she becomes one of the most attractive female figures in the Morte Darthur, a fitting partner for her noble lover.

It has become a commonplace critical statement that the character of King Mark, the third party in the love triangle, is blackened in the French prose Tristan. In the poems, although he is driven to excess occasionally by the frustration of attempting to end the relationship between his wife and nephew, he remains a relatively admirable character.[16] The conflict in the poetic tradition turns on the question of irreconcilable love and loyalty: Tristram's passion for Isode conflicts with his duty to his liege lord. The prose romances do not reflect this tension, however; instead, they emphasize Mark's unworthiness by degrading his character.

In his discussion of the Tristram section of the Morte Darthur, T. C. Rumble concludes that "Malory's most successful deviations from the French prose tradition of the story have to do with his recharacterization of King Mark."[17] While admitting that the French source had already accomplished the blackening of Mark's character, Rumble points to inconsistencies in characterization and demonstrates how Malory avoided those pitfalls. For example, in the French romance Mark appears as a murderer and a coward before Tristram reaches adulthood. Immediately after the prose writer reports the hero's dolorous birth, King Mark enters the narrative: "Le roi Marc de Cornouaille assassine lâchement à la Fontaine au Lion, son frère Perneham, qui lui avoit reproché sa poltronnerie. . ." (Lö., 21). A short time later, Mark plans the murder of Melyodas and fails to kill the child only through Governal's courageous actions (Lö., 23). Rumble states that all versions of the prose Tristan include this episode. A dwarf warns Mark of Tristram's future prowess, thereby engendering Mark's fear and distrust of his nephew.[18]

Malory omits both of these incidents, although Mark's treacherous murder of his brother is related at the beginning of "Alexander the Orphan" (633). When Tristram eventually arrives at the Cornish court, Mark welcomes him cordially: "'A Jesu!' seyde kynge Marke, 'ye ar welcom, fayre nevew, to me'" (379). By judicious omissions, Malory avoids the source's lack of uniformity. For example, in the prose romance, after his hatred has been well documented, Mark expresses his delight at Tristram's arrival (Lö., 28). Malory maintains the affection between uncle and nephew right up to the battle with Marhalt and Tristram's subsequent illness: "Than was kynge Marke and all hys barownes passynge hevy, for they demed none other but that sir Trystrames sholde nat recover" (384). The barons in the French source are hostile because of jealousy, and no mention is made of Mark's emotions (Lö., 29).

Mark's joy at Tristram's return to Cornwall after his sojourn in Ireland is similarly original to Malory. He mentions that "Marke was hole in hys prosperité" (393), presumably because the tribute to Ireland had been abolished, and that the king and his barons were "passyng glad" (393) to have the hero once more in their court. After a short trip to visit his parents, Tristram takes up residence in Cornwall: "And there he lyved longe in grete joy longe tyme. . ." (393). In the French source, Tristram's father is, of course, already dead. Without delay, the author begins the episode of Sir Segwardes' wife which, in Malory's words, caused "jolesy and unkyndenesse betwyxte king Marke and sir Trystrames, for they loved both one lady" (393). Rumble points out that "in the _Tristan_ poems Mark's hostility to Tristram is inspired primarily by his barons, who are jealous of him and fearful that he will inherit the kingdom of Cornwall after Mark's death."[19] However, most of the Cornish barons in the _Morte Darthur_ support Tristram; Mark stands virtually alone in his enmity. Vinaver comments that Malory ignores the animosity of the barons,[20] but Rumble correctly states that

> Malory seems not so much to have "ignored" the hostility of the barons in his source as to have altered his source deliberately in order to center the hostility against Tristram completely in the character of King Mark, and thus to develop his principal conflict in terms of one villain and one hero.[21]

Mark's pattern of shameful behaviour begins in his rivalry with

Tristram over the favours of Sir Segwarde's wife. Both uncle and nephew are enamoured of the lady, who understandably prefers the young hero. Intercepting the lady's dwarf, who carries news of an assignation to Tristram, Mark determines to ambush his nephew and to take his place at the lady's side: "so kynge Marke armed and made hym redy and toke two knyghtes of his counceyle with hym. And so he rode byfore for to abyde by the wayes for to wayte uppon sir Trystrames" (394). Vinaver indicates that Mark's retainers are not mentioned in the French source[22] and Rumble explains that Malory changes the scene so that Mark is accompanied by two knights and Tristram is alone.[23] In the French source Tristram has reinforcements with him, and Mark is unaccompanied. Moreover, the prose Tristan does not allude to an ambush; Mark proceeds to the place of rendez-vous, believing himself to be "bien supérieur en prouesse à son neveu" (Lo., 34). He wounds his nephew, who is later even more seriously wounded in his battle with Segwardes. Mark, unaware of the second encounter, prides himself on being "le seul auteur des blessures de notre héros" (Lo.,34).

Malory describes the contest between Segwardes and Tristram without mention of further wounds, and although Mark pretends concern for his nephew, he does not gloat about his imagined success as he does in the source. Malory's slight changes and omissions in this episode highlight his concern with honour and shame. Mark appears even more villainous than in the French romance because of the inequality and surprise of his attack on Tristram. He is robbed even of his imaginary honour by the omission of his proud self-delusions. Tristram, in contrast, becomes more noble in defeating three adversaries before his amorous tryst and by overpowering Segwardes afterwards. He even admits that he has offended Segwardes and refuses to kill him: "'Sir knyght . . .I counceyle you smyte no more! Howbehit for the wrongys that I have done you I woll forbere you as long as I may'" (395). He shows no such courtesy in the French source.

When he disguises himself on his shameful quest to kill Tristram, the evil king personifies dishonour. Setting the tone of this despicable adventure, Mark's first deed involves murdering one of his companions who objects to the king's intent "to destroy sir Trystram by some wylys other by treson" (578). Sir Armaunte, his second companion, immediately censures Mark for this outrage: "'Hit was foule done and myschevously'" (578). Each character Mark meets on his journey to Camelot reinforces this initial perception.

In disguise, Mark first chances upon Lamerok, who, upon hearing Mark's accent, launches into a long condemnation of the King of Cornwall, calling him the "'shamfullist knyght of a kynge that is now lyvynge'" (580) and commenting that "'Hit is pité. . .that ony suche false kynge cowarde as kynge Marke is shulde be macched with suche a fayre lady and a good as La Beall Isode is, for all the wo[r]lde of hym spekyth shame, and of her grete worshyp as ony quene may have'" (580).[24] Lamerok begins his censure much more quickly than he does in the French source, where Lamerok first asks news of the "pire roy del monde et du plus mavés" (Lö., 210). Upon hearing Mark's reply that the king is well, Lamerok remarks, "si il a bien cest duell et domages, et se il avoit mal, ce seroit moult grant joie" (Lö., 210). In addition, Malory accentuates Mark's baseness by having Lamerok criticize the king's treatment of

Tristram, "the worshypfullyst knyght that now is lyvynge" (580). No similar denunciation occurs in the French romance, nor does the prose writer mention Mark's unworthiness to keep his honourable queen. By bringing Mark's baseness to the reader's attention in this way, Malory blackens his character to an extent not found in the prose Tristan. He skillfully prepares his reader for Mark's ignoble actions while justifying the relationship of Tristram and Isode, who are cast in direct opposition to the shameful king.

But Malory does not rely on this one encounter to establish Mark as a villain; he layers episode upon episode and modifies the reactions of the characters to create a picture of consummate cowardice and treachery. In a condensation of the source which changes the thrust of his criticism, Dinadan meets the disguised Mark and reproves him " for the love of kynge Marke a thousand-folde more than ded sir Lameroke " (580). In the French prose source, Dinadan insults the courage of Cornish knights in general and mentions the king only in passing: "votre roi si est desheritez de totes honneurs. . . ."[25] When Dinadan and Lamerok learn Mark's true identity, they are "sory of [his] felyshyp" (583). In a speech not found in the source, Dinadan says, "'And bycause I promysed to conduyte hym to my lorde kynge Arthure, nedis muste I take a parte wyth hym; howbeit I love nat his condision, and fayne I wolde be from hym'" (583). Shortly thereafter, Dinadan delivers a damning indictment of Mark:

> 'Hit is shame to you. . .that ye governe you so shamfully, for I se by you ye ar full of cowardyse, and ye ar also a murtherar, and that is the grettyst shame that ony knyght may have, for nevir had knyght murthere[r] worshyp, nother never shall have.' (585)

Vinaver points out that in the prose Tristan "Dinadan's conversation with Mark is an exchange of humorous repartees. It contains no serious criticism of Mark. . . ."[26] Malory, however, changes his source to accentuate the baseness of Mark's character. By doing so, he attempts to exonerate Tristram of blame in the adulterous affair with Isode, for Mark clearly does not deserve such an honourable lady.

Intensifying the disparity between shame and honour, Malory alters his source to make Dinadan a more noble and courageous knight. Although Dinadan may disagree with the spontaneous heroism of Tristram and Launcelot, Malory is careful not to present him as a coward. In an encounter with Sir Berluse and his two cousins, Mark is immediately unhorsed. Sir Dinadan must avenge him, although he finds Mark's company abhorrent. Dinadan then unhorses Berluse's two companions, for "this sir Dynadan was a good knyght on horsebacke" (583). Finally, a battle on foot ensues, where "thorow the grete force of sir Dynadan" Mark is able to overpower Berluse, who is saved only by Dinadan's intervention. As the narrator says, "this kynge Marke was but a murtherer" (583). In the French source, Mark unhorses Berluse in the first encounter and Dinadan then upsets the two cousins. In the ensuing battle he calls out to Mark, "Roi Marc, n'ayez pas peur! nous nous tirerons bien d'affaire, s'il plaît à Dieu!" (Lö., 216). No such cameraderie is evident in Malory. Moreover, although Dinadan saves Berluse in the French source, it is out of pity for a knight who has fought hard and well (Lö., 216), and no mention is made of Mark's desire to kill Berluse.

Similarly, in the next encounter, Mark and Dinadan meet a challenger at a bridge. Dinadan, against his inclination, assigns the joust to Mark: "But sir Dynadan knew the knyght for a noble knyght, and fayne he wolde have justyd, but he had levir that kynge Marke had justed with hym. But by no meane kynge Marke wolde nat juste" (584). In the French source Dinadan is reluctant from the beginning to joust: "Dinadan qui aurait pu se dispenser de cette joute l'entreprend par folie et pour l'amour du roy Mark. . ." (Lŏ., 217). Upon being unhorsed, Malory's Dinadan is "passynge wrothe" that the knight will not fight on foot; in the French, however, he says, "qu'il emportera donc son deshonneur avec lui" (Lŏ., 217). Malory has obviously ennobled Dinadan and removed any hint of fellowship between him and the felon king. Mark's shame stands out in contrast to the nobility of his reluctant companion.

Malory keeps Mark's treachery before the reader by having even the minor characters recognize and denounce Mark's evil conduct. Sir Berluse, who must be rescued by Dinadan from Mark's shameful attack, identifies the king as the cowardly murderer "'that slew my fadir afore myne owne yghen, and me had ye slayn had I not ascapyd into a woode. . .for ye slew my [fader] traytourly and cowardly'" (582). In an addition to the French, Malory has Berluse conclude:

> 'For hit [is] pyté that ever ye sholde be in the company of good knyghtes, for ye ar the moste vylaunce knyght of a kynge that is now lyvynge, for ye ar a dystroyer of good knyghtes and all that ye do is but by treson.' (582)

Berluse's tale is echoed in the section of the "Book of Sir Tristram" which Vinaver has labelled "Alexander the Orphan." In Malory's introduction, which has no identifiable source, Mark kills his brother, Prince Bodwyne, because he is jealous of Bodwyne's "worship and honour" and because "this prynce Bodwyne lovid well sir Tristram" (634). Mark accuses his brother of stealing his honour and of cherishing those whom he hates; he then strikes "hym to the herte wyth a dagger, that he never aftir spake worde" (634). Early in the narrative of the French source, the evil king murders his sleeping brother at a fountain (Lö., 21). Malory emphasizes Mark's treachery by explaining that Bodwyne and his family were Mark's guests at the time of the cowardly attack. The king, therefore, breaks the rules of hospitality as well as of chivalry. Only through the kindness of Isode do young Alexander and his mother escape Mark's evil intentions.

Sir Berluse, whose flight to the woods after the death of his father similarly spares him from Mark's malice, honours the role of host, even though he knows Mark to be his father's assassin. He says to Mark, "'But wyte you well, for the love of my lorde sir Torre, whyche is lorde of this castell, I woll nat at this tyme nother hurte nor harme you, nothir none of your felyship'" (582). Mark's villainy is thrown into sharp relief by the courtesy of this young knight, who, unlike Mark, has every reason to violate the rules of hospitality and avenge his father's death. By means of subtle contrast and through direct condemnation, Malory accentuates Mark's heinous conduct and shows him to be totally devoid of honour.

Palomides encounters Mark on the way to Camelot and quickly leaves his company, even though Mark still travels in disguise. Thinking he is alone, Palomides laments his unrequited love for Isode:

> 'And yet to love the I am but a foole, for the beste knyght of the worlde lovyth the and ye hym agayne, that is sir Trystram de Lyones. And the falsyst knyght and kynge of the worlde is

> youre lorde kynge Marke. And alas! so beawteuous a lady and pereles of all othir sholde be matched with the moste vylaunce knyght of the worlde!' (592)

In the French prose Tristan, Palomides dwells on Isode's virtues and Mark's failure to appreciate his beautiful wife. Although the soliloquy is much longer, Mark's unworthiness as a knight is not emphasized; rather, Palomides accuses Mark of being like a blind man: "il ne saurait distinguer l'or du quoivre" (LB., 227).[27] Mark is censured for being an inattentive and undiscerning lover rather than, as in Malory, for his willful perversion of chivalrous conduct.

Vinaver rightly comments that in Malory's version of Palomides' lament, all courtly colouring is lost[28]; however, he does not mention Malory's emphasis on Mark's knightly rather than amatory unworthiness. The exaggerated posturing of the French courtly lover pining in exquisite agony over his unresponsive love-object may have been beyond Malory's sympathies, but Mark's unworthiness to hold Isode was not. This unworthiness stems, in Malory's view, from Mark's baseness of character and lack of knightly virtues rather than from his failure to appreciate her beauty and virtue. Like Mark's other companions, Palomides focuses attention on the king's perfidy through direct statements and through contrast with a noble character. By shaping and subtly changing the French source, Malory intensifies Mark's shame.

Mark's cowardice is further stressed in his shameful practice of ambushing unprepared adversaries. While such tactics may lead to victory, according to the chivalric code taking unfair advantage of an opponent is dishonourable and worthy of reproach. In the prose Tristan, Mark invents an elaborate fantasy about strange and mysterious adventures near "lac aventureux," and Gaherys and Kay are eager to test his tale. They leave Mark's court, expecting to be met by opponents willing to joust:

> Marc dit à Keu qu'à ce lac, dont les aventures dépassent de beaucoup celles du royaume de Logres, il pourra trouver un chevalier qui se battra avec lui, s'il arrive de nuit; il y trouvera deux chevaliers, s'il amène un compagnon, trois, s'il en amène deux, et ainsi de suite jusqu'à douze.
> (Lö., 172)

Malory blackens Mark's character by omitting this warning; the king merely asks Kay and Gaherys if they wish to try the adventure of the forest of Morrois. Malory significantly changes the name of the lake from "aventureux" to "Perelous" (548). Gaherys is wary of Mark's invitation: "And sir Gaherys seyde he wolde be avysed, for kynge Marke was ever full of treson" (547). He cautions Kay: "'ye ar nat wyse to ryde at the rekeyste of kynge Marke, for he delith all with treson'" (548). As the reader expects, Mark and Andret, his henchman, dressed all in black, attempt to ambush the knights of the Round Table. In the source, the Round Table companions surprise Mark, who, paralyzed with fear, comically falls into the lake. Malory's rendition is much more deadly and serious. When the ambush fails and the "false traytours" are defeated, Gaherys castigates Mark: "'For thou arte a Kynge annoyted with creme, and therefore thou sholdist holde with all men of worship'" (549).

In his study of medieval political theology, Ernst Kantorowicz notes the parallel between medieval coronation practice and the annointing of the kings of Israel.[29] Inspired by God, the practice was held to be a sacrament comparable to the sacraments of ordination and baptism.[30] By his consecration, the king assumes an infinite as well as a temporal role; he becomes a shadow of Christ.[31] When the king is anointed with chrism, a holy oil, the Holy Spirit transfigures him with n time, and he becomes a part of the divine order. Writing in the twelfth century, an anonymous theologian explains the mystery:

> He, the anointed by grace, parallels as a gemina persona the two natured Christ. . .the terrestrial king *is* not, he *becomes* a twin personality through his anointment and consecration.[32]

Belief in the mystical powers of royal consecration diminished during the medieval period until in 1547 Archbishop Cranmer could state that the oil only symbolized the fact that the king held a special place as God's anointed.[33]

Whether miraculously transformed or merely divinely called to his special position, the medieval king remained a man set apart, a model for his subjects. Tristram admiringly observes that "'all knyghtes may lerne to be a knyght'" from Arthur (745). When Lamerok rebukes Mark for failing in his vocation, the sanctity of the king's consecration is recalled; he sins against his high calling, thus mocking his position as Christ's vicar on earth.

Mark's actions are shameful in both Malory and the French prose Tristan, but Malory emphasizes the king's unknightly conduct by changing incidents to rob Mark of whatever vestiges of honour may cling to him and by adding speeches condemning his villainous behaviour. Through the actions of worshipful knights and ladies, Malory keeps the ideal of knighthood before the reader. By doing so he degrades Mark's character even further than the prose writer dared to do. In E. K. Chambers' view, Malory "make[s] King Mark quite unnecessarily contemptible."[34] But to justify Tristram's relationship with Isode, Mark must be seen as the enemy of chivalry. Malory never condemns the love between Tristram and Isode; in fact, virtually every main character at some point laments that, in Palomides' words, "'so beawteouous a lady and pereles of all othir sholde be matched with the moste vylaunce knyght of the worlde'" (592). As Vinaver states, while censuring Malory for losing the great tragedy of two lovers fated to live out an unsanctioned passion,

> . . .Tristram is no longer a tragic figure, but a brave and valiant knight whose behaviour is fully justified by the code of chivalry. He has no scruples in openly challenging Mark, the enemy of knighthood. The story thus degenerates into a physical struggle between the hero and the villain. . . .[35]

Malory is not interested in a treatise on grand passion, however, but in a code of knightly conduct which demands that hero be pitted against villain. He changes his source to make his villain more despicable and undeserving of his exceptional wife, and to make his hero more honourable and therefore entitled to the fairest lady.

The next character of importance, Palomides, is linked to Tristram by ties of love and hate. As E. L. Effland points out,

> The hostility between Tristram and Palomides because of their regard for Isode is the first of the continuing conflicts which run through the Tristram story and help give it unity in spite of its episodic construction.[36]

Tristram's first tournament immediately after being cured of his poisoned wound involves Sir Palomides (843-44), and the last battle in the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" takes place between these two rivals. In this battle, Tristram's victory leads directly to the Saracen's baptism. Between these two encounters, one at the very beginning of the story and the other at its conclusion, Malory weaves a long thread of love and hate, honour and treachery.

Palomides is a schizophrenic character. Recognized by Arthurian society as one of the four best knights in the world (330; Lö., 147) and capable of honourable success in difficult quests,[37] he stoops to shameful trickery and lies on more than one occasion. At the Castle of Maidens he earns the censure of both Arthur and Launcelot by maliciously attacking the wounded Tristram. In a passage not present in the French source, Arthur says, "'that was grete dishonoure to sir Palomydes, inasmuch as sir Trystram was so sore wounded'" (535), and Launcelot adds, "'sir Palomydes shall repente hit, as in hys unknyghtly delynge so for to folow that noble knyght. . .'" (535).

At the tournament at Lonezep, Palomides pretends not to recognize Tristram and, hoping that Launcelot will dishonour Tristram, initiates a battle between them. When he is later questioned, he maintains his story, even though Isode recognizes his treachery. She rebukes him in her speech to Tristram:

> 'I saw thys day how ye were betrayed and nyghe brought unto youre dethe. . .And therefore, sir, how sholde I suffir in youre presence such a felonne and traytoure as ys sir Palomydes?' (755-56)

In this episode Malory follows his source closely (Lö., 380-81), even to reporting that Palomides wept in his sleep after this incident. Malory, however, adds Tristram's compassionate comment to his fellow knights: "'Say ye nothynge,' seyde sir Trystram, 'for I am sure he hath takyn angir and sorow for the rebuke that I gaff hym and La Beall Isode'" (758). In fact, Tristram readily forgives Palomides after the tournament, explaining to Arthur and Launcelot, in Palomides' presence, "'I have pardouned hym, and I wolde be ryght lothe to leve hys felyshyp, for I love ryght well hys company'" (758).

In the prose Tristan, Palomides assumes his own defence and Tristram makes no declaration of friendship, although he pardons his rival (Lö., 380). Similarly, even after Palomides' shameful attack at the Castle of Maidens, Tristram holds him in high esteem. In response to a maiden's description of a strange knight she had encountered, Tristram says, "'that was Palamydes, the good knyght. For well I know hym. . .for one of the beste knyghtes lyvyng in thys realme'" (536). Soon after, both Tristram and Palomides find themselves imprisoned by Sir Darras: "And every day sir Palomydes wolde repreve sir Trystram of olde hate betwyxt them, and ever sir Trystram spake fayre and seyde lytyll" (540). No mention of their relationship appears in the French romance, however: "Dinadan se désole surtout de voir deux si vaillants chevaliers en prison; il y resterait volontiers lui-même, pourvu qu'ils en pussent sortir. Tristan est fort inquiet, mais il se contient devant ses compagnons" (Lö., 166).

In both these episodes, Malory uses Palomides to accentuate Tristram's courtesy. Instead of returning hate for hate and treachery for treachery, Tristram responds to Palomides with sensitivity and kindness; he understands the Saracen's essential nobility and is willing to forgive his frequent lapses. Palomides likewise recognizes Tristram's courtesy and is always desperately sorry for his misdeeds. In a speech echoed throughout the pages of the "Book of Sir Tristram" Palomides apologizes to Tristram for his inexplicable malice:

> 'I pray you, sir Trystram, forgyff me all my evyll wyll! And yf I lyve I shall do you servyse afore all the knyghtes that bene lyvynge. And thereas I have owed you evyll wyll me sore

> repentes. I wote nat what eylyth me, for mesemyth that ye ar a good knyght; and that ony other knyght that namyth hyselff a good knyght sholde hate you, me sore mervaylyth.' (697)

A comparison with the French original of this passage is impossible, for Löseth merely states that the rivals are reconciled: "Ils se réconcilient, mais la paix ne doit pas être de longue durée" (Lö., 365). What is certain, however, is Malory's emphasis on Palomides' ambivalent feelings for Tristram. Palomides admits that he does not know what causes him to disgrace himself. When his envy and malice force him away from Tristram and Isode, he sorrows as much for the loss of Tristram's friendship as for the exile from his beloved lady:

> . . .and ever he made the grettyst dole that ony man cowde thynke, for he was nat all only so dolorous for the departynge frome La Beall Isode, but he was as sorowful a parte to go frome the felyshyp of sir Trystram. For he was so kynde and so jantyll that whan sir Palomydes remembyrd hym [thereof] he myght never be myrry. (763)

The French prose writer does not stress Palomides' devotion to Tristram; Palomides weeps only because he must leave Isode's presence. Vinaver points out that the passage above does not appear in Malory's source. He writes:

> It seems to be part of M[alory]'s own conception of the story of Palomides to stress his loyalty in all circumstances and never to allow his love for Isode to affect his friendly devotion to Tristram.[38]

Malory highlights Palomides' admiration and respect for Tristram throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones," and clearly Tristram reciprocates. Upon Palomides' successful completion of the quest which leads him to the Red City, Tristram welcomes his story with words of praise: "'Truly,' seyde sir Trystram, 'I am glad ye have well sped, fo[r] ye have done worshypfully'" (722). Immediately following

Palomides' homecoming, the knights gather for the tournament at Lonezep; Palomides requests the first encounter. Tristram graciously replies, "'Well,' seyde syr Trystram, 'and ye ar nat so fayne to have worship but I wolde as fayne increase youre worship'" (728). Neither of these courteous conversations appears in the French source; in fact, the entire emphasis shifts to the Saracen's desire to excel in front of Isode: "Palamède, en proie à ses peines de coeur, se promet de faire de son mieux pour surpasser son rival en bravoure" (LÖ., 373). On the way to the tournament, he undertakes the first battle because of Isode: "Palamède, désireux de se signaler devant celle qu'il aime, obtient la bataille, qui est, dit'il, trop peu de chose pour un chevalier de la valeur de Tristan" (LÖ., 374). Tristram makes no reply in either case.

By establishing mutual admiration between the two knights, Malory increases the honour of both. Palomides is torn between his friendship for Tristram and his love for Isode, a conflict which leads him to desperate and often dishonourable actions. However, his noble nature gravitates to Tristram, because honourable knights love the company of other honourable knights: "for evermore o good knyght woll favoure another, and lyke woll draw to lyke" (527). Although Isode surpasses Sir Segwardes' wife in both action and temperament, the bond between her two admirers reflects the respect which Sir Segwardes demonstrates for Tristram when he says, in a statement original to Malory, "'I woll never hate a noble knyght for a lyght lady, and therefore I pray you to be my frende'" (442). Isode is no "lyght lady" and is not so easily dismissed, but the bond of masculine friendship in both instances remains the same. In Palomides' case, his affection is the source of much anguish. By creating this tension, Malory makes the Saracen at once more interesting and more noble; in addition, the conflict between love and loyalty which is frequently portrayed in the Morte Darthur finds expression in yet another love triangle.

In his relationship with Palomides, Tristram demonstrates unfailing courtesy in response to the Saracen's treachery. Always ready to forgive attacks against his person, he proves that he is genuinely interested in Palomides' worship. He gives him the quest to revenge King Harmaunce of the Red City, for example (702). Even Palomides' devotion to Isode, which irritates Tristram more than any of Palomides' other actions, is met with courtesy. In a representative incident, Tristram controls his anger when he hears Palomides lamenting his unrequited love: "Than sir Trystram remembyrde hymselff that sir Palomydes was unarmed, and of so noble a name that sir Palomydes had, and also the noble name that hymselff had" (780). In the French source, not only does Tristram not recognize the singer of the song,[39] but no long exchange occurs, and no mention is made of his scruples over attacking an unarmed knight (Lŏ., 384). Malory expands the episode to provide a firm motive for the challenge which the hero delivers and to illustrate how a noble knight avoids outrageous acts.

Malory creates an internal conflict in Palomides between loyalty to a friend and love for a lady, a tension which explains in part Palomides' shameful actions. But Malory was not satisfied with this explanation alone; he emphasizes as well the fact that Palomides is not a Christian.[40] After Palomides wins the right to take Isode because of her rash promise in connection with Brangwen's return, Tristram challenges the

Saracen for the lady they both love. Isode stops the battle, however, saying,

> 'Alas! that one I loved and yet do, and the other I love nat, that they sholde fyght! And yett hit were grete pyté that I sholde se sir Palomydes slayne, for well I know by that the ende be done sir Palomydes is but a dede man, bycause that he is nat crystened, and I wolde be loth that he sholde dye a Sarezen.' (425)

The implications of dying unchristened become vividly clear at the tournament at Surluse, when Palomides kills the pagan Sir Corsabryne:

> Than he smote of his hede. And therewithall cam a stynke of his body, whan the soule departed, that there myght nobody abyde the savoure. So was the corpus had away and buryed in a wood, because he was a pay[n]ym. (666)[41]

In the French prose Tristan, Corsabryne kills himself when his defeat is immanent, and the devil carries off his soul:

> Apres le dinêr, long combat entre Palamède et Corsabrin. Ce dernier est vaincu; il refuse de se rendre, déclarant que son adversaire ne le tue pas, il se tuera lui-même. . . . son âme est emportée par un diable, à en juger par la fumée noire et puante qui se produit au moment de sa mort. . . .
> (Lö., 282d, p. 199)

Malory makes Corsabryne's damnation theologically more forceful by omitting mention of suicide; even a Christian forfeited his right to burial in hallowed ground by committing this unforgivale sin. Corsabryne's soul is putrid because he was unbaptized.[42] Isode's concern for Palomides' spiritual welfare reflects her fear of a similar destiny for him. In the prose romance, she makes no mention of Palomides' state of grace. Stopping the battle without a reason, she sends Palomides with a message to Gwenevere, thereby banishing him from her presence until she arrives in Logres (Lö., 44). Not only does Malory's addition demonstrate Isode's compassion for Palomides, but it keeps the pagan knight's religion before the reader. Also, Corsabryne's death scene illustrates the spiritual foulness of an unbaptized knight. Palomides conducts himself honourably in many situations because, as he says, "'I woll that ye all knowe that into this londe I cam to be crystyned, and in my harte I am crystynde, and crystyned woll I be'" (666).[43] However, he remains a Saracen until the final chapter of the "Book of Sir Tristram," a state which may explain his inconsistent conduct.[44] Tristram brings the pagan to Christ and to Arthur; the enmity between the two rivals is resolved in Palomides' baptism at which Tristram becomes his godfather, and in their fellowship as knights of the Round Table. In contrast, the Palomides of the French romance seeks baptism on his own accord after Tristram's death (Lö., 560). The rivals never achieve full reconciliation; their final battle ends with Tristram's anger and Palomides' vow to avoid battle with his rival at all costs (Lö., 506).

Through additions and deletions, Malory depicts his hero as forgiving and courteous, able to appreciate the virtues of even a flawed companion. He stresses Tristram's charisma by emphasizing the Saracen's devotion to the noble knight, even though they both love the same lady. Finally, in an ending original to Malory, Tristram becomes directly responsible for Palomides' baptism and induction into the fellowship of the Round Table. Their old animosity concluded, Palomides rides off peacefully to pursue the Questing Beast and Tristram returns home to Joyous Gard.[45]

In his study of the hero, Raglan suggests that heroic characters are often accompanied by a clown or fool who may assume the role of seer.

Frequently the comic character provides sharp insights into the heroic world; he sees things more clearly than his master, whose eyes are clouded by the search for fame and glory.[46] In the French prose _Tristan_ and in Malory, Dinadan plays such a role. In the former, Dinadan is cynical and sarcastic, questioning the very foundations of the chivalrous life. His sharp tongue and disregard for knightly behaviour make him an unattractive character, somewhat similar to Sir Kay. Although in the French source Tristram does not reproach Kay for his derisive remarks (Lő., 72a), Malory's hero sharply rebukes him:

> 'Now wyte you well that ye ar named the shamefullyst knyght of your tunge that now ys lyvynge. Howbeit ye ar called a good knyght, but ye ar called unfortunate and passyng overthwart of youre tunge.' (488)

In contrast, Dinadan is universally loved and esteemed by noble knights, as demonstrated by passages original to Malory.[47] When Tristram discovers Dinadan in the vicinity of Joyous Gard, he remarks to Isode: "'. . .he is the beste bourder and japer that I know, and a noble knyght of his hondis, and the beste felawe that I know, and all good knyghtis lovyth his felyship'" (692). Malory follows his source in Tristram's subsequent invitation to Dinadan and in the practical joke which follows, but the praise for Dinadan does not appear in the French. (Lő., 363).

Unlike Kay, whose satirical comments stem from jealousy of other good knights, Dinadan does not conceal rancorous envy in his high spirits. The narrator in the _Morte Darthur_ explains: "Ryght so cam in sir Dynadan and mocked and japed with kynge Bagdemagus, that all knyghtes lowghe at hym, for he was a fyne japer and lovynge unto all good knyghtes"

(659-60). Malory omits the inconsequential substance of Dinadan's taunts and substitutes this comment which highlights his position in Arthurian society.[48]

Malory increases Dinadan's honour by demonstrating that he is well admired and respected by his fellows, but this is not sufficient in Malory's eyes to make him a suitable companion for a hero of Tristram's stature. Dinadan's courage and nobility help qualify him for the honour of Tristram's friendship. On numerous occasions, despite protests to the contrary, Dinadan reacts to a challenge with knightly honour. While conducting Mark to Camelot, he responds to various confrontations with fortitude, quite in contrast to the pusillanimous Mark. Similarly, when he meets the disguised Tristram on the way to the tournament at Lonezep, he challenges the stranger to a joust. Tristram, feigning cowardice, refuses, thereby earning Dinadan's contempt: "'Fye on the, cowarde!' seyde sir Dynadan. 'Thou shamyste all knyghtes!'" (695). They next encounter Gareth, and Trystram once again refuses to joust. Crying, "'A, shame betyde the!'" (695), Dinadan attacks Gareth bravely, only to be unhorsed. He leaps to his feet, condemning his companion for failing to take revenge, and he offers to fight Gareth on foot.

The account of Dinadan's knightly behaviour is much expanded in Malory's version. In the French romance, Dinadan does not challenge the "cowardly" knight to joust, nor does he rebuke Tristram for his apparent faint-heartedness. Gareth, not Dinadan, proposes a sword battle after the joust, only to be met by Dinadan's jests:

> «Certes fait Dinadan, grant amour y avés vous voirement; je m'en sui bien apperceü: de la grant joie que vous eüstes de ma venu me portastes vous si durement a terre que encore m'en deulent les os.» (Lö., 364)

In the source, Dinadan responds to this encounter like the clown that he is; in Malory, however, he responds in the manner of a worshipful knight, thus demonstrating that in spite of his witticisms he accepts the basic conventions of honourable knightly conduct.

Throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" Malory alludes to Dinadan's courage and martial ability. When Palomides treacherously attacks the badly wounded Tristram after the tournament at the Castle of Maidens, Dinadan offers to sacrifice himself so that his friend may escape:

> 'Sir Trystram, my lorde, ye ar so sore wounded that ye may nat have ado with hym. Therefore I woll ryde agaynste hym and do to hym what I may, and yf I be slayne ye may pray for my soule. And so in the meanewhyle ye may withdraw you and go into the castell or into the foreyste that he shall nat mete with you.'
> (532; cf. Lö., 140)

Later, Dinadan rescues a lady from the vile embraces of Breunys Sans Pité, saying, "'Lat hym com!. . .And bycause of honoure of all women I woll do my parte'" (553; cf. Lö., 184a). He wounds the villain and delivers the lady to her uncle's castle. In addition to such knightly exploits, Malory frequently mentions Dinadan's prowess at tournaments. For example, at Surluse he performs "many grete dedis of armys" (653) and does "passyngly well" (669; cf. Lö., 282d). In all of these adventures Malory reproduces incidents found in his source. Significantly, he does not omit mention of Dinadan's honourable deeds in the same way that he suppresses his obnoxious jesting. Because of Malory's emphasis, Dinadan becomes a more noble and attractive character.

In the French romance, Dinadan mocks the heroic knights for their inexplicable devotion to the chivalric ideal. Unlike his frequently witty and mostly harmless jests, his mockery cuts deeply into the fabric of knightly society. On the eve of the tournament at the Castle of Maidens, when Palomides takes unfair advantage of the unprepared Tristram, Dinadan seizes the opportunity to ridicule Tristram's defeat (Lö., 122). Malory, however, completely changes this response:

> So with that cam sir Dynadan, and whan he saw sir Trystram wroth he lyste nat to jape, but seyde,
>
> 'Lo, sir Trystram, here may a man preve, be he never so good yet may he have a falle; and he was never so wyse but he myght be oversayne, and he rydyth well that never felle.' (516)

Instead of being cast as a sardonic scoffer, Dinadan is presented as a concerned friend who comforts Tristram's wounded ego with commonsense observations on the vulnerability of even the greatest knights. When Malory does not transform Dinadan's sarcasm, he omits it altogether, as in the after-dinner conversations at the tournament at Surluse. Dinadan's long and digressive dialogues with various knights on aspects of love and chivalry (Lö., 282d) do not appear at all in the Morte Darthur, because Malory mainly disapproves of their content and wishes to ennoble Dinadan's character.

Throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" Dinadan reveals himself as "jantyll, wyse and a good knyght" (605); his good natured humour endears him to his fellow knights, and the sting of his attack on chivalry is mainly suppressed. Although he contends that "'hit is ever worshyp to a knyght to refuse that thynge that he may nat attayne'" (581), he is no coward but is ready to assist his companions when necessary "'unto my puyssaunce, uppon my lyff!'" (597). He becomes a more sensitive and honourable comrade for the noble Sir Tristram.

As D. S. Brewer notes, in Malory's society acceptance by the noble knights of the Round Table brings the most honour by association.[49] Arthur's ideal order is both represented and fullfilled by his noble companions; to join them is the dream of every worshipful knight. On the Grail Quest, Percival's aunt explains to him the social and moral significance of the Round Table[50]:

> 'Merlyon made the Rounde Table in tokenyng of rowndnes of the worlde, for men sholde by the Round Table undirstonde the rowndnenes signyfyed by ryght. For all the worlde, crystenyd and hethyn, repayryth unto the Rounde Table, and whan they ar chosyn to be of the felyshyp of the Rounde Table they thynke hemselff more blessed and more in worship than they had gotyn halff the worlde.' (906)

Tristram's adventures reach a high point at his induction into Arthur's fellowship. From this point onward, he owes fealty to the most honourable of kings, and his break with Mark's shameful court is complete. Only after his loyalty to Mark is removed is he free to escape with Isode and live in contentment at Joyous Gard. Moreover, his fame and honour increase as a knight of the Round Table to a point that they overshadow Launcelot's: ". . .sir Trystram enchevyd many grete batayles, wherethorow all the noyse and brewte felle to sir Trystram, and the name ceased of sir Launcelot" (784-85). Occurring at almost the middle of the narrative,[51] Tristram's admission to the order of the Round Table marks the climax of the first part of the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones."[52]

When Tristram first arrives at Camelot, Arthur does not wait for a formal presentation but hurries to greet the hero and extends a personal welcome:

> So wyth this come kynge Arthure, and when he wyste sir Trystram was there, he yode unto hym, and toke hym by the

> honde, and seyde,
>
> 'Sir Trystram, ye ar as wellcom as ony knyght that ever com unto this courte.' (570)

In her attempt to prove that Tristram's adventures contradict the code of knightly virtue established by Arthur at the founding of the Round Table, Maureen Fries describes Tristram's reception as "formal," "chilling" and "rhetorically somewhat reminiscent of his earlier greeting by Morgan le Fay."[53] Fries' adjectives do not accurately describe the personal and emotional welcome which Arthur extends. The king's delight is evident in his desire to lead Tristram to the Round Table; he twice takes the hero's hand to conduct him first into the audience chamber and then to his seat at the Round Table. Gwenevere and her ladies gather in excitement, all saluting the visitor:

> Than kynge Arthure toke sir Trystram by the honde and went to the Table Ronde. Than com quene Gwenyver and many ladyes with her, and all tho ladyes seyde at one voyce,
>
> 'Wellcom, sir Trystram!'
>
> 'Wellcom!' seyde the damsels.
>
> 'Wellcom,' seyde kynge Arthur, 'for one of the beste knyghtes and the jentyllyst of the wo[r]lde and the man of moste worship. For of all maner of huntynge thou beryste the pryce, and of all mesures of blowynge thou arte the begynnynge, of all the termys of huntynge and hawkynge ye ar the begynner, of all instirments of musyke ye ar the beste. Therefore, jantyll knyght,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'ye ar wellcom to this courte.' (571)

After the hero's official welcome, the king specifically requests that he remain at Camelot (572). "And than kynge Arthure made sir Trystram a knyght of the Rounde Table wyth grete nobeley and a feste as myght be thought" (572).

In this pageant of joyful commotion, Arthur plays the gracious host; his court echoes his hospitality. It is difficult to understand how this rich tapestry of movement and emotion could be interpreted as "formal" or "chilling."

Malory embellishes the description of Tristram's arrival at Arthur's court; in the prose romance only Arthur and Gwenevere celebrate the conclusion of Launcelot's quest (Lö., 205-06). Arthur's words of praise are original to Malory, as is the enthusiastic welcome of the entire assembly and the description of the noble feast. Clearly Tristram's honour is increased not only by his induction into the fellowship of Round Table knights but by the scope and duration of festivities in his honour. Arthur, Launcelot and the company of noble knights and ladies recognize and rejoice in the worship and courtesy of their new companion.

The sole similarity between Tristram's joyous and repeated welcome at Camelot and his earlier confrontation with Morgan lies in the narrator's comment that Morgan and her thirty knights, like Gwenevere's ladies, speak at once: ". . .and all tho ladyes seyde at one voyce. . ." (571); "Than the quene spake and all the thirty knyghtes at onys. . ." (511). Morgan's insults to Gawain follow; she never addresses Tristram specifically. Grounds seem very slim for a case that these two incidents, so completely different in context and participants, are intended to reflect one another, as Fries argues. The important connection is thematic: in both cases Tristram's honour is acknowledged. Morgan's knights remain in their tower, not out of any fear of Gawain but because they recognize Tristram's military superiority. At Arthur's court he is esteemed for courtly talents as well as for his prowess; his friends know him to be chivalrous as well as formidable in battle.

Fries paints a timid Arthur, unable to praise Tristram for justice and mercy, qualities that, according to Fries, Tristram lacks. She labels "incongruous" the king's repeated admiration of Tristram's "jantylnes."[54] She argues that Arthur cannot ignore Tristram's prowess and therefore reluctantly accepts him into the fellowship. But none of this is evident in the text: Arthur welcomes Tristram twice; he shows his pleasure by greeting the hero at his arrival and by insisting that he remain at court. Having been led to Camelot by Launcelot, Tristram reflects the glory and honour of both his sponsor and his new liege lord.

Throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones," Tristram associates with noble and admirable characters. Malory's changes to his source make Isode and Dinadan more attractive, emphasize Tristram's courtesy in his relationship with the inconsistent Palomides, vilify the evil King Mark and stress Arthur's delight in the fellowship of such an honourable and powerful knight. Noble companions are necessary to the honourable hero in Malory's world, but equally important for the increase of worship are exemplary deeds of courtesy and prowess. The hero's conduct, like his comrades, must reflect his honour.

Chapter III

The Hero's Conduct: Tristram's Prowess and Courtesy

In attempting to link the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" with the rest of the Morte Darthur, critics such as T. C. Rumble, Charles Moorman and Maureen Fries have centered on the character of Tristram. Claiming that Malory has a moral message to impart, Rumble explains that the love between Tristram and Isode is analogous to the disastrous passion shared by Launcelot and Gwenevere. He writes:

> However much the character of King Mark is blackened in the "Tristram," and however much that procedure tends to diminish our reprobation of the relationship between Tristram and Isoud, we are somehow never allowed to forget that the relationship is, after all, an adulterous one, and that, like the relationship between Lancelot and Gwenevere, it is thus symbolic of the moral degeneration to which the potentially perfect world of Arthur's realm is so inevitably being brought.[1]

Delineating what he calls Malory's "deeply tragic awareness of chivalry's failure to attain perfection,"[2] Moorman echoes Rumble's assertion that Tristram represents a debased chivalry:

> Malory, in short, attempts to strip the courtly glamour from the Tristan-Isode legend by presenting the story of a young knight and a married queen whose sins are all of their own making and who all too obviously resemble Lancelot and Guenevere.[3]

Moorman stresses the parallels between Arthur's court and the court of Cornwall, agreeing with Rumble that "the honour of both courtes" may "nat be lyke, but. . .the morality is essentially the same."[4] Similarly, Tristram is depicted by Maureen Fries as a "counter-hero" to the magnificent Launcelot.[5] She contends that his importance rests in his position as "a symbol of the decay of the Arthurian world from its own ideals."[6] Although she admits that "Sympathy goes with the lovers to be sure and no moral reprobation is expressed,"[7] Vida Scudder, also, contends that Tristram's character "is purposely and systematically degraded."[8]

Most of these critics center on the ignoble relationship between Tristram and Isode as proof of his dishonour. There is no question that Malory had little sympathy with adulterous love; indeed, he attempts to avoid the issue when dealing with Launcelot and Gwenevere by delicately commenting,

> For as the Freynshhe booke seyth, the quene and sir Launcelot were togydirs. And whether they were abed other at other maner of disportis, me lyste nat thereof make no mencion, for love that tyme was nat as love ys nowadayes. (1165)

The rhetoric sends the reader back to Malory's panegyric on the nature of love at the beginning of his tale of the Knight of the Cart. In the old days, he remarks, "men and women coude love togydirs seven yerys, and no lycoures lustis was betwyxte them, and than was love trouthe and faythfulnes" (1120).

Later in the narrative, Malory demonstrates his discomfort with Launcelot's adulterous affair by transferring the blame for the collapse of Arthur's glorious kingdom to Gawain. By focusing on Gawain's implacable desire for vengeance, the drama shifts from the love triangle to the knightly fellowship. Arthur makes it clear that his wife is of less importance to him than his knights:

> 'And therefore,' seyde the kynge, 'wyte you well, my harte was never so hevy as hit ys now. And much more I am soryar for my good knyghtes losse than for the losse of my fayre quene; for quenys I might have inow, but such a felyship of good knyghtes shall never be togydirs in no company.' (1183-84)

King Arthur, faced with the certainty of the collapse of his Round Table, as well as the loss of his wife, makes explicit his priorities; he is willing to forgive both Launcelot and the Queen in order to avert the catastrophe which he so clearly foresees. Gawain, admitting the possible innocence of the Queen, remarks, "As for my Lady the quene, wyte thou well, I woll never say [of] her shame" (1189); however, he will not accept Launcelot's contrition for the deaths of Gareth and Gaherys. Launcelot perceives the situation clearly and draws attention to the true cause of the contention:

> '. . .for well I undirstonde hit boteneth me nat to seke none accordemente whyle ye, sir Gawayne, ar so myschevously sett. And yf ye were nat, I wolde nat doute to have the good grace of my lorde kynge Arthure.' (1189)

Obviously, Malory regrets the necessity of reproducing Launcelot's grand and fatal passion for Gwenevere. Attempting to qualify the nature of their commitment, he stresses Gawain's failure of knightly honour in the breakdown of the Arthurian order.

Malory's ambiguity is nowhere more apparent than in his treatment of Launcelot and Gwenevere after the collapse of Arthur's ideal. Although Gwenevere "had a good ende" because "whyle she lyved she was a trew lover" (1120), at the conclusion of the Morte Darthur she renounces her passion for Launcelot and dies a holy nun, beseeching God that she may never again look on Launcelot with her "worldly eyen" (1255). Launcelot, too, ends his life in penetential prayer and fasting for his adulterous love (1256). Even while their affair is in full flower, Gwenevere is rebuked by Elayne, the mother of Galahad:

> 'And therefore alas! madame ye have done grete synne and yourselff grete dyshonoure, for ye have a lorde royall of youre

> owne, and therefore hit were youre parte for to love hym; for there ys no quene in this worlde that hath suche another kynge as ye have. And yf ye were nat, I myght have getyn the love of my lorde sir Launcelot. . . .' (806)

Similarly, Sir Bors loses patience with what he understands to be Gwenevere's hypocritical grief over Launcelot's madness:

> 'Now, fye on youre wepynge!' seyde sir Bors de Ganys. 'For ye wepe never but whan there ys no boote. Alas!' seyde sir Bors, 'that ever sir Launcelot or ony of hys blood ever saw you, for now have ye loste the beste knyght of oure blood, and he that was all oure leder and oure succoure.' (808)

The speeches of both Elayne and Sir Bors are of Malory's own invention[9]; both draw attention to the regret with which Launcelot's family and friends greet his involvement with Gwenevere.

No similar distress afflicts Tristram's relationship with Isode; without exception, Tristram's companions praise the union of their hero and his lady, finding in it a perfect match. After the lovers escape from Cornwall, Launcelot invites them to use his own castle, Joyous Gard:

> And wyte you well that castell was garnyshed and furnysshed for a kynge and a quene royall there to have suggeourned. And sir Launcelot charged all his people to honoure them and love them as they wolde do hymselff. (681)

Delighted at Tristram's return to Logres, Arthur calls a tournament in his honour. After the fighting, the king visits Tristram and Isode in their pavilion and gives them his blessing:

> 'Madame,' seyde kynge Arthur, 'hit is many a day ago sytthyn I desyred fyrst to se you, for ye have bene praysed so fayre a lady. And now I dare say ye ar the fayreste that ever I sawe, and sir Trystram ys as fayre and as good a knyght as ony that I know. And therefore mesemyth ye ar well besett togydir.' (757)

Isode's physical attractiveness mirrors her moral goodness, and even Arthur acknowledges that her beauty is unparallelled, even by Gwenevere.

Malory does not disapprove of her relationship with Tristram, whereas he strongly dislikes Gwenevere's liaison with Launcelot. Gwenevere's moral shortcomings, which are reflected in her later arbitrary treatment of her lover, also detract from her beauty.

Tristram never repudiates his love for Isode, he is never called upon to defend her honour in a judicial battle and the "Book of Sir Trystram de Lyones" ends with the lovers happily established at Joyous Gard. Tristram is killed not by a jealous husband who asserts the righteousness of his cause in fair combat but by a cowardly villain who must resort to treachery to murder his rival. Lamerok justly asserts that the court of Cornwall is inferior to Camelot:

> '. . .for I had lever stryff and debate felle in kyng Markys courte rether than in kynge Arthurs courte, for the honour of bothe courtes be nat lyke.' (443)

While Rumble agrees that Lamerok's statement is accurate, he adds, incorrectly, that although the honour is "nat lyke," the morality is similar.[10] If the honour is not the same, then the morality cannot be similar. Throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram," Malory excuses the adultery of the two lovers because of their nobility in the face of Mark's utter perfidy. They are not seen as immoral, because Isode's marriage to a dishonourable knight is unsuitable. In contrast, Arthur is the epitome of Christian kings, presiding over a glorious court; he is an honourable ruler who does not deserve to be dishonoured by an adulterous wife. Launcelot's conflict between his love and admiration for Arthur and his passion for Gwenevere finds no counterpart in Cornwall. The morality cannot be similar precisely because the honour is "nat lyke."

Both Tristram and Launcelot go mad on account of their obsessive love. Malory's treatment of each episode highlights the differences between the two love triangles, reinforcing his approbation of Tristram's love for Isode. In her study of medieval attitudes towards madness, Penelope Doob states that madness was invariably linked to sin[11] and was inflicted upon a person for purposes of "punishment, purgation or test."[12] Both Launcelot and Tristram can be numbered among those who become mad in expiation for their sins. Describing the "Unholy Wild Man," Doob explains that

> . . .such a man commits atrocious sins, but for some reason--often because he is graced with excellence in some respect--his sins are at once symbolized, punished and purged by a period of temporary madness or wildness during which he degenerates into a bestial state of unconscious penance until forgiveness finally brings sanity and restoration.[13]

Both Tristram and Launcelot illustrate this general pattern of sinners atoning for sin through insanity. However, a problem remains in the identification of the sin for which they do penance. Because both resort to their old love immediately upon their recovery, they have obviously not been effectively punished and purged of their sin of adultery.

It is true that Tristram and Isode part after his recovery, but her tender words indicate no abatement of passion:

> 'And ever whan I may I shall sende unto you, and whan ye lyste ye may com unto me, and at all tymes early and late I woll be at youre commaundement, to lyve as poore a lyff as ever ded quyene or lady.' (502)

Exhausted from his ordeal and piqued at his concomitant loss of honour, Tristram replies testily, "'A, madame!. . .go from me, for much angur and daunger have I as [say]ed for youre love'" (502). Nevertheless, after his exile from Cornwall and acceptance into the fellowship of the Round Table, Tristram returns with Mark, "and all was for the entente to see La Beale Isoud, for without the syghte of her syr Tristram myght not endure" (610). The French source makes no mention of Tristram's desire to see Isode once more (Lö., 252a). Arthur precipitates Tristram's departure by insisting that Mark pardon his nephew and restore him to his rightful place at the Cornish court (Lö., 251a). In his added comment, Malory stresses once more Tristram's overwhelming love for Isode. Following the pattern established by Tristram, Launcelot is healed of his madness by the power of the Holy Grail and thereafter applies himself to the rigors of the Grail Quest. However, when he returns, he begins "to resorte unto quene Gwenivere agayne," and the narrator comments that they love "togydirs more hotter than they dud toforehonde" (1045). Temporary insanity has not purged either lover of his adulterous passion.

Both Tristram and Launcelot suffer a period of madness in atonement for sins not against God and Christian morality but against Love itself. Bound to their ladies by professions of fidelity, both transgress through involvement with other women. Tristram's madness originates in rage and jealousy over letters which he finds.[14] His friend, Kayhedin, falls deeply in love with Isode and writes "unto her lettirs and baladis of the moste goodlyeste that were used in tho dayes" (493). Isode comforts him in a return letter. Finding and misinterpreting the correspondence, Tristram accuses Isode of infidelity and Kayhedin of "falshed and treson" (494). But Kayhedin is also Tristram's brother-in-law, and in a speech of Malory's invention, Tristram reveals the true cause of his unwarranted outburst:

> 'Howbehit I wedded thy syster, Isode le Blaunche Maynes, for the goodnes she ded unto me, and yet, as I am a trew knight, she ys a clene maydyn for me.' (494)

Tristram has been unfaithful to Isode by marrying Isode White Hands, and in his guilt interprets even innocent transactions as dishonourable betrayal.

In the French romance, Tristram does not catalogue reasons which demand Kayhedin's loyalty; he merely says, "je vous deffy."[15] He does not refer to his marriage; in fact, in the French tradition Isode's virginity is an offence against her family which Tristram carefully conceals. Malory includes Tristram's confession in order to absolve him of blame in his marriage. After this statement, which serves as an annulment, Isode White Hands never reappears in the narrative.[16] But confession is not sufficient; penance must follow. Tristram, eaten by jealousy and guilt, retreats to the forest where he becomes "leane and poore of fleyshe" (496). Eventually, he is sheltered by shepherds, who clip him with shears to make him look like a fool.[17]

Even in his madness, Tristram's honourable nature never quite deserts him. True to his legendary fame as a great minstrel, he gains comfort from music:

> And othirwhyle, whan he found the harpe that the lady sente hym, than wolde he harpe and play thereupon and wepe togydirs. And somtyme, whan he was in the wood, the lady wyst nat where he was. Than wolde she sette hir downe and play uppon the harpe, and anone sir Trystrames wolde com to the harpe and harkyn thereto, and somtyme he wolde harpe hymselff. (496)

Doob points out that music was considered therapy for the demented:

> . . .the almost universal prescription of music as a cure for madness developed strong spiritual overtones in the Middle Ages: because Saul's possession was cured by David's harping,

> music was thought to be particularly efficacious in conquering the devil and sin-induced disease.[18]

Perhaps music to the medieval mind possessed such powers because it expressed universal wholeness and harmony. By alluding to Tristram's superior musical ability, Malory reminds his reader of the hero's former perfection. Although in Palomides' words, "'hit ys grete pité that ever so noble a knyght sholde be so myscheved for the love of a lady'" (497), the reader understands that Tristram's nobility is not entirely lost.

Like some of his courtly virtues, Tristram's military powers stay with him throughout his period of madness. Calling love dementia a "strange occupational disease of knight-errantry,"[19] Richard Bernheimer discusses the easy link between the enormous power of the true beast-man of the woods and the knightly ability of a superior warrior. The true medieval wild man was depicted as a sub-human creature raised in the woods, unable to communicate with man but possessing awesome physical power.[20] A short imaginative leap replaces this mythological creature with a distressed hero, who even in his distraction retains his martial ability.

Tristram symbolically divests himself of his knighthood at the fountain:

> Than uppon a nyght he put his horse frome hym and unlaced hys armour, and so yeode unto the wyldirnes and braste downe the treys and bowis. (496)[21]

In the source, Fergus and Brangwen find the hero's helmet and hauberk by the fountain, but no mention is made of his horse (Lö., 80). Throughout the Morte Darthur, however, the horse symbolizes dedication to chivalry. Expressing a sentiment not found in the source, Lamerok castigates his brothers, who have lost their horses in the confusion of a tournament:

> 'What is a knyght but whan he is on horseback? For I sette nat by a knyght whan he is on foote, for all batayles on foote are but pyllours in batayles, for there sholde no knyght fyght on foote but yf hit were for treson or ellys he were dryvyn by forse to fyght on foote.' (667; Cf. Lö., 282d)

Even though Tristram renounces his knighthood, he retains vestiges of nobility and prowess. He first defends his benefactors, the shepherds, against Sir Dagonet and his squires. The mad Tristram playfully dunks the knight in the fountain. Later, insensed by the rustics' laughter, Dagonet and his retinue return to "the kepers of the bestis and all to-bete them" (498). Wresting the sword from Dagonet's hand, Tristram kills one of the squires and chases the other away. He then rushes into the woods, "rennynge as he had bene wyld woode" (306). A short time later he rescues Sir Dynaunte from the ignoble giant, Tauleas, again by seizing the knight's sword and beheading the oppressor (500).

Malory draws on Tristram's established prowess in foot-battles to link his abilities when mad to his former accomplishments. In the two most significant battles of his career, he demonstrates the might of his sword-arm. He fatally wounds Marhalt in a long and difficult encounter, and he overpowers Sir Blamoure in hand-to-hand combat. In contrast to the hero's more worthy opponents, the giant is dispatched with ease:

> Than sir Trystram was ware of the swerde of the knyght thereas hit lay, and so thydir he ran and toke up the swerde and smote to sir Tauleas, and so strake of hys hede. . . . (500)

The traditional wild man of the forest armed himself only with a club[22]; Tristram, even in his deranged state, is capable of wielding a knightly sword.

Malory follows the general plot of the French source, adding or omitting details as necessary to create a picture of his hero who retains shreds of his former nobility. In the prose romance, Tristram is reluctant to kill the giant, as in Malory's account. However, instead of immediately grasping the sword dropped by Dynaunte, the hero of the French romance is directed by the shepherds:

> Tristan saisit l'épée; il demande encore: « Que veux-tu que je fasse de cette épée?» --et le berger de répéter: « Va, frappe ce diable-là à la tête, de toutes tes forces!» (Lö., 103)

In contrast, Malory's Tristram has not forgotten his military training; no rustic need instruct him in the art of battle.

Tristram's healing in the Morte Darthur differs markedly from that in the source. Malory relates how Mark instructs his knights to bring the madman to Tintagel:

> And so they ded savely and fayre, and keste mantels uppon sir Trystramys, and so lad hym unto Tyntagyll. And there they bathed hym and wayshed hym and gaff hym hote suppyngis, tylle they had brought hym well to hys remembraunce. (501)

The treatment is primarily psychological. Doob cites the popularity of tender care as a cure, noting that "influential physicians. . .recommended a combination of fresh air, moderate diet, light wines, exercise, music, and rational discourse."[23] Tristram does not require phlebotomy, a common cure for love-madness.[24] Commenting on the moral component of the cure, Doob states that "It was widely believed that no purely physical cure would be effective unless the sin that originally caused the disease were forgiven."[25] Tristram confesses his sin against love, renouncing any claim to Isode White Hands by publicly declaring her virginity. He is severely punished, yet he finally returns to sanity and Isode's forgiveness. Running parallel to his guilt is his suspicion of

Isode which still causes him grief even in his recovery. When he sees her for the first time, "he knew her well inowe, and than he turned away hys vysage and wepte" (501). He is not reconciled until her "pyteous lettirs" (513) reach him in his exile. Eventually, however, the lovers are happily reunited in Logres.

The French romance does not mention Tristram's marriage to Isode White Hands in the context of his madness. Where the English Tristram never tells his friend Fergus the reason for his melancholy (495), his French counterpart bemoans his lady's infidelity, although he is reluctant to provide details:

> Il consent à avouer à Fergus, qui est un des hommes du monde en qui il a le plus de confiance, qu'Iseut est la cause de son désespoir; puis il se reprend et ne veut plus rien dire pour ne pas blâmer celle qu'il a tant aimée. (Lö., 78)

Not only is Malory's hero far too noble to question his lady's honour even to a close friend, but the origins of his despair are more complex than in his source. Where Malory's hero is treated with kindness, warm clothes and good food, Mark's knights in the French romance lead the hapless fool back to Tintagel, where he is cruelly harassed for their entertainment. In a cure which entirely fits his affliction, he is bled. Finally, repeating her role as ministering physician, Isode restores him to health (Lö., 104).

Malory's development of Tristram's madness is both more interesting and more substantial than the episode in his source. He does not allow his hero to degenerate into an imbecile, taunted by both rustic and gentleman alike. Tristram retains his appreciation of music and his ability as a warrior. He redeems himself after his surprising marriage to Isode

White Hands through the implication that the marriage will be dissolved, and by his penance in the forest. Isode welcomes him back joyfully; even Launcelot, who swore eternal enmity at the news of Tristram's wedding (435), becomes his friend and sponsor. He survives this potentially shameful crisis with his honour undiminished.

Launcelot's madness clearly reflects the pattern established by Tristram, with the exception that his sin is much greater, requiring both penance and cure to be more difficult. Like Tristram, he breaks his promise of fidelity to his lady, but unlike his counterpart, Launcelot consummates the union (albeit under enchantment) and produces a son. In his distraction he retains great knightly ability, even though he runs "wylde woode from place to place" and lives "by fruyte and suche as he myght gete and dranke watir two yere" (817). Other knights lament his downfall: "'Jesu defende,' seyde that knyght, 'that ever that noble knyght, sir Launcelot, sholde be in suche a plyght!'" (819). He is cured only by the divine power of the Holy Grail, for his trespass was preordained to produce the perfect knight, Sir Galahad:

> And there cam an holy man and unhylled that vessell, and so by myracle and by vertu of that holy vessel sir Launcelot was heled and recoverde. (824)

Both heroes suffer privation and madness to gain absolution for breaking their faith.

More important than Launcelot's transformation to an "Unholy Wild Man" is his position as a "Holy Wild Man" at the end of the Morte Darthur. In Doob's discussion, the life of the "Holy Wild Man" marks a conscious decision to atone for a major sin:

> Such a man voluntarily undertakes a life of hardship and

> penance in the wilderness, remarkably similar to the involuntary madness and wildness of the Unholy Wild Man.[26]

In their final years, Launcelot and his companions live in prayer and fasting at a remote hermitage: "Thus they endured in grete penaunce syx yere. . . .And soo their horses wente where they wolde, for they toke no regarde of no worldly rychesses" (1255). Where Tristram in his involuntary madness divests himself of his knightly trappings without knowing what he does, Launcelot allows his horse to wander free; his chivalric life is at an end. No sin against Love's dictates leads Launcelot to the holy life; rather, he must be absolved of his adulterous relationship with Gwenevere. At Gwenevere's graveside, he explains his grief to a hermit:

> '. . .for my sorow was not, nor is not, for ony rejoysyng of synne, but my sorow may never have ende. For whan I remembre of hir beaulté and hir noblesse, that was bothe wyth hyr kyng and wyth hyr, so whan I sawe his corps and hir corps so lye togyders, truly myn herte wold not serve to susteyne my careful body. Also whan I remembre me how by my defaute and myn orgule and my pryde that they were bothe layed ful lowe, that were pereles that ever was of Cristen people, wyt you wel. . . this remembred, of their kyndenes and myn unkyndenes, sanke so to myn herte that I myght not susteyne myself.' (1256)

With both confession and penance completed, Launcelot dies a blessed death. His eternal redemption is witnessed by the bishop:

> 'Truly,' sayd the Bysshop, 'here was syr Launcelot with me, with mo angellis than ever I sawe men in one day. And I sawe the angellys heve up syr Launcelot unto heven, and the yates of heven opened ayenst hym.' (1258)

Where Malory allows Tristram to remain at Joyous Gard, happily enjoying the company of his lady until his death through Mark's treachery, Launcelot must renounce his passion and pursue a penetential life far more rigorous than the sojourn of either knight in the forest. Malory does not censure Tristram's passion for Isode, but Launcelot's sin must be purged. Throughout the "Book of Sir Tristram" Malory softens the criticism of Tristram's adultery, concentrating rather on his knightly honour.

Malory's apparent double standard can be explained by considering his artistic goals. He establishes that the honour of Tintagel nowhere equals the honour of Camelot and that no absolute system of morality exists in a society based on honour. For example, the crime of "enforcing" a lady or gentlewoman entails punishment by death (120), but the violation of a common maiden by a nobleman draws no censure. When Merlin reveals Sir Torre's true parentage, informing the young man that his father is not Ayres the cowherd but King Pellinore, Torre reacts sharply: "'Dishonoure nat my modir'" (101). Merlin pacifies him:

> 'Sir. . .hit ys more for your worship than hurte, for youre fadir ys a good knyght and kynge, and he may ryght well avaunce you and your modir both, for ye were begotyn or evir she was wedded.' (101)

The low-born husband of Torre's mother comforts himself with this knowledge, never presuming to defend his reputation, the honour of a common man not equalling the honour of a knight and king.

King Arthur's honour cannot be compromised if his kingdom is to remain ordered. As Donald Schueler points out in his study of the Tristram section, Tristram is an "independent" knight.[27] Malory was free to gloss over Tristram's adulterous relationship because its consequences do not jeopardize the well being of an entire society. Schueler argues that

> Lancelot is not a greater knight than Tristram because he has greater prowess; on the level of action and adventure there is

> little to choose between the two. But Tristram has no significance larger than himself. . . .Lancelot, on the other hand, is the archetype of Arthur's ideal fellowship, the heroic right arm of a heroic king.[28]

Because of his special position in the Morte Darthur, Launcelot is punished as Tristram is not, but he is also magnificently rewarded.

Malory provides no spiritual dimension to Tristram's character, although in the French source he undertakes the Grail Quest. In contrast, Malory's Launcelot almost succeeds in achieving the Grail, faltering only at the doorway to the holy chamber. After his return from the quest, he becomes an agent of divine grace in "The Healing of Sir Urry." Even though he doubts his worth and is reluctant to attempt to cure the injured knight where so many have failed, he alone succeeds. Finally, when his sins are purged through fasting and penitence, he ascends to his heavenly reward. Because Launcelot's destiny is linked with the entire Arthurian order, his transgressions are more important and his penance more severe than Tristram's, but he attains an apotheosis denied to Tristram. Malory's treatment of the adultery in Logres and in Cornwall differs, but his seeming inconsistency becomes understandable when the honour of the two courts and of the two heroes is considered.

The fact that the Tristram of the French source is presented as an honourable hero is stressed by P. E. Tucker in his discussion of chivalry in the Morte Darthur:

> More than once when he is arraigned for his love of Isode, Tristram boasts of his prowess, and recalls his past achievements. But although Malory did not at heart believe in Tristram's self-justification or accept his adultery, he could not discover in himself or in his text any way of criticizing him--he was too obviously the hero and knight of worship.[29]

Tucker proceeds to demonstrate that Malory quite capably finds ways to criticize Launcelot for his adulterous liaison. The logic of the argument is thus unclear, for if Malory was unable to discover a means whereby Tristram could be censured, how could his genius change so abruptly when dealing with Launcelot? Throughout the Morte Darthur Launcelot occupies the coveted position of the best of worldly knights. Tristram's prowess is always measured by Launcelot's standard. Surely if Malory could reprimand Launcelot, he could find a way to blame Tristram, regardless of his position as a "hero and knight of worship." The conclusion must be that Malory never intended to reproach him; in fact, the author modifies his source constantly in order to ennoble his hero.

Tucker correctly identifies the Tristram of the prose romance as a superior knight, but Malory seizes every opportunity to increase his stature. When Tristram undertakes the judicial battle on behalf of King Angwysh of Ireland, he requires assurance that he fights in a just cause:

> '. . .I woll take the batayle for you uppon this conducion, that ye shall graunte me two thynges: one is that ye shall swere unto me that ye ar in the ryght and that ye were never consentynge to the knyghtis deth.' (407)

The second favour concerns Tristram's reward for championing Angwysh's cause. In the source, Tristram immediately agrees to Angwysh's request, asking only for an unspecified reward upon successful completion of the battle:

> «Sire, mout avez fait por moi, et je referai por vos ceste chose par covent que vos m'otroiez un don aprés ce que je avrai mené a fin ceste chose. (Curtis, 410; Lö., 36)

The oath taken by Round Table knights specifically prohibits fighting unjust battles: "Also that no man take no batayles in a wrongefull quarell for no love ne for no worldis goodis" (120). The tenets of this code are Malory's own, as is Tristram's query about the righteousness of Angwysh's case. Malory demonstrates that although his hero has not yet been admitted to the charmed circle, his nobility qualifies him for membership.

Tristram's knowledge of knightly courtesy is stressed throughout the narrative, but frequently Malory alters his source to increase the honour of his hero's response to a given situation. When Sir Segwardes' wife is carried off by Sir Bleoberys de Ganys, Tristram refuses to rescue her immediately because of his concern for knightly decorum. He explains to a lady who berates him "in the horrybellyst wyse" (397):

> 'Fayre lady, hit is nat my parte to have ado in suche maters whyle her lorde and husbonde ys presente here. And yf so be that hir lorde had not bene here in this courte, than for the worship of this courte peraventure I wolde have bene hir champyon.' (397)

Because he fears Mark's anger, the hero of the French source does not pursue the ravisher of his lady. Both nephew and uncle admire her; they have already engaged in one unpleasant encounter in their rivalry for her affections. Counselled by Governal, Tristram decides that discretion is wiser; he has no intention of rescuing Segwardes' wife. Eventually, he encounters Bleoberys and becomes the agent of the lady's release, but he blunders across the escaping pair while following one of the ubiquitous and outspoken damsels of the prose romance. Clearly, the French source depicts a hero whose courtesy is far from exemplary (Curtis, 377-80; Lö., 34).

Malory provides an honourable justification of Tristram's initial reluctance. In contrast to the French source, Malory's hero immediately sets out to recover the lady when Sewardes' efforts fail: "Whan sir Trystrames herde of this he was ashamed and sore agreved, and anone he armed hym and yeode to horsebacke, and Governayle, his servaunte, bare his shylde and his spere" (397). In both the source and Malory, Bleoberys and Trystram fight until they identify themselves and agree to desist because of their mutual admiration. The lady, unimpressed with Tristram's efforts, rejects him and departs with Bleoberys. In Malory, however, she is reunited with her wounded husband, since Bleoberys has completed his quest with her capture; in the French source she does not return to Segwardes.

Although her anger with Tristram may be understandable in terms of his behaviour in the prose romance, Malory's hero clearly does not deserve her rejection. Tristram's bemused response to her rebuff is original to Malory. Replying to Bleoberys, who also seems confused by the lady's fickleness, Tristram swears to "'beware what maner of lady I shall love or truste'" (402). His conduct has been above reproach, as even Segwardes admits when, in a passage of Malory's devising, he expresses his pleasure at Tristram's intervention: "So that wordis pleased sir Segwardes gretly, that sir Trystrames wolde do so muche" (403). He later indicates that he understands his wife quite well, when he declares that he "'woll never hate a noble knyght for a lyght lady'" (442). Both the French source and the Morte Darthur present a hero of exceptional prowess; Malory transforms the rather unpolished champion of French romance into a sensitive and courteous knight.

At his first meeting with Dinadan, Tristram suggests that they defeat thirty knights who wait in ambush for Launcelot. Understandably, Dinadan expresses horror at the odds, refusing to engage in battle unless his companion lends his shield:

> 'I woll nat thereoff but iff ye woll lende me your shylde. For ye bere a shylde of Cornwayle, and for the cowardyse that ys named to the knyghtes of Cornwayle by youre shyldys ye bene ever forborne.' (505)

Tristram declines, stating, "'I woll nat departe frome my shylde for her sake that gaff hit me'" (505). Representing more than simply protection in battle, his shield reminds him of Isode. In the source, however, Tristram has no scruples about surrendering it: he exchanges shields with Dinadan, commenting that "cet écu est un présent de la plus belle dame du monde et qu'il doublera ses forces" (L8., 108). From Malory's point of view, such disregard for a token of love does not indicate knightly honour; consequently, he changes the conversation to reflect Tristram's courtesy.

To substantiate her argument that Tristram is not only discourteous but ignoble, Maureen Fries cites the episode of the Castle Pleure. Interpreting Tristram's fulfillment of the evil custom of the castle as evidence of his moral decay, she remarks,

> Such violation of the chivalric obligation to women caused the French Tristram to declare. . .'j'en seray honny a toute ma vie,' a sentiment the English author seems deliberately to have omitted.[30]

But Fries has overlooked, as Malory did not, that the lady of the Castle Pleure is evil, herself antithetical to the tenets of chivalry. Tristram beheads her cleanly, having beforehand registered his disapproval of the custom. When originally told that the lady of the castle must lose her head if she proves to be less beautiful than her guest, Tristram exclaims, "'So God me helpe. . .this is a foule custom and a shamfull custom'" (413). But indignation about the practice entails contempt for those who perpetuate it, and thus the lady must suffer the consequences of her dishonourable ways. Because there is no dishonour inherent in destroying those who seek to destroy good knights, Malory deliberately omits the French Tristram's outburst. In a speech which has no parallel in the source, the hero explains his philosophy of justice to the evil Brewnor and his wife:

> '. . .bycause thou and she of longe tyme have used this wycked custom and by you bothe hath many good knyghtes and fayre ladyes bene destroyed, for that cause hit were no losse to destroy you bothe.' (414)

After Tristram dispatches the shameful couple, he is challenged by Brewnor's son, Galahalt the High Prince. During the battle, Tristram is outnumbered and put to the worse by his opponent's troops. Acknowledging the futility of continuing the fight, he yields to Galahalt, who grants him mercy. The King with the Hundred Knights, a companion of Galahalt's, comments, "'That ys your shame. . .for he hath slayne youre fadir and your modir'" (417). Galahalt replies,

> 'As for that. . .I may nat wyght him gretly, for my fadir had hym in [preson] and inforsed hym to do batayle with hym. And my fadir hadde suche a custom, that was a shamefull custom, that what knyght and lady com thydir to aske herberow, his lady [must] nedis dye but yf she were fayrer than my modir; and if my fadir overcom that knyght he muste nedis dye. For sothe, this was a shamefull custom and usage. . . .' (417)

The king then sees the justice in Tristram's actions and agrees: "'So God me helpe. . .this was a shamefull custom'" (417). Galahalt promises never to perpetuate the custom of the castle, and Tristram departs in friendship.

In the speech delivered by the King with the Hundred Knights, Malory stresses the dishonourable practices embraced by Brewnor and his wife. In the French source, however, the king makes no comment on Galahalt's duty to his parents, nor does he pronounce judgement on the custom of the castle (Lö., 40). Although Galahalt's discomfort with his parents' ignoble actions is expressed earlier in the narrative, his immediate reason for freeing Tristram rests in his admiration of the hero's prowess (Lö., 40). By delaying Galahalt's condemnation and by basing his mercy to Tristram on the justice of Tristram's cause, Malory removes any suspicion that his hero acts dishonourably.

Throughout the Morte Darthur, no shame is attached to a knight who kills an opponent in fair battle. Noble knights frequently increase their worship by demonstrating superior prowess at organized tournaments. Unfortunately, other good knights are sometimes injured or killed in the process. During the tournament at the Castle of Maidens, Tristram kills three of Sir Darras' sons and seriously wounds two more of them. As Tristram is enjoying Darras' hospitality, a maiden informs the host of his sons' misfortune, and Tristram is imprisoned along with his companions, Dinadan and Palomides (333). By doing so, Darras contravenes the conventions of knightly hospitality, a misdemeanor he regrets later upon hearing of Tristram's illness: "'for God deffende, whan knyghtes com to me for succour, that I sholde suffir hem to dye within my preson'" (552). He apologizes to Tristram:

> 'Sir knyght, me repentis of youre sykenes, for ye ar called a full noble knyght and so hit semyth by you. And wyte you well that hit shall never be seyde that I, sir Darras, shall destroy such a noble knyght as ye ar in preson. . . .' (552)

After accepting his host's apology, Tristram explains his own position. In a speech not parallelled in the French romance, he absolves himself of blame in the death of Darras' sons:

> 'And as for the dethe of youre two sunnes, I myght nat do withall. For and they had bene the nexte kyn that I have, I myght have done none othirwyse; and if I had slayne hem by treson other trechory, I had bene worthy to have dyed.' (552)

Malory follows his source quite closely in this episode, making only a few small changes; however, these alterations serve to ennoble his hero. The French Tristram apologizes for killing Darras' sons, claiming that he did not recognize them. He begs the father's pardon for his misdeed (Lö., 183). In contrast, Malory's Tristram maintains to the end that he did no dishonour; death in tournaments is a regrettable but unavoidable risk. In the source, Darras pardons Tristram, "en déclarant qu'il accorde ce pardon plutôt à cause de la haute chevalerie de Tristan que par amour pour sa personne" (Lö., 183). He does not apologize to his prisoner. In Malory, he not only repents of his harsh treatment but also seeks Tristram's friendship: "'But sith ye be sir Trystram the good knyght, I pray you hartyly to be my goode frynde and ⟨unto⟩ my sunnes'" (552). With expected courtesy, the hero graciously replies, "'I promyse you by the faythe of my body, ever whyle I lyve I woll do you servyse, for ye have done to us but as a naturall knyght ought to do'" (552). Malory's minor alterations reinforce Tristram's image as a courteous knight. The hero of the prose romance is indisputably powerful, but his might is often unrefined. In this episode, as in the rest of the "Book of Sir Tristram," Malory attempts to smooth the rough edges, thereby creating a more noble hero.

The first article of the Round Table code admonishes noble knights to avoid "out(e)rage," which Vinaver glosses as "violence" or "excessive violence."[31] But Malory uses this word as it was commonly employed in his time to denote flagrant wrongfulness, enormity, atrociousness, heinousness. Indeed, sanctioning a knight against using violence appears foolish, for even a cursory reading of the _Morte Darthur_ shows chivalric life to be violent in the extreme. In his definition, Vinaver fails to appreciate the moral aspect of the word. Where even excessive violence is frequently used by the knights in the course of their adventures, the Round Table code is established to check the ferocity of battles by prohibiting willful disregard of courteous behaviour. Often linked with murder, "outrage" and its derivatives describe such abuses.

On the Quest of the White Hart, a damsel asks Torre to kill "'thys false Knyght Abelleus, for he ys the moste outerageous knyght that lyvith, and the grettist murtherer'" (112). Also, on the Grail Quest, Percival's aunt exclaims, "'A, sir Percyval! . . .wolde ye fyght with hym? I se well ye have grete wyll to be slayne, as youre fadir was thorow outerageousnes slayne'" (905). The evil Malagryne, when challenging Alexander the Orphan to battle, boasts that he has "'slayne ten good knyghtes by myssehap, and by outerage and orgulyté of myself I have slayne othir ten knyghtes'" (641). "Outrage" connotes treachery and a shameful disregard for the unwritten rules of fair play which allow for equal combat. It alludes to unfair advantages seized in defiance of honourable conduct. While outrageous behaviour can easily result in victory over an opponent, the success is shameful because prowess and skill do not contribute to the outcome.

Even chivalrous knights commit outrageous acts in the heat of battle or because of divided loyalties; however, they differ from their felonious adversaries in that they acknowledge their faults and usually apologize for their *démesure*. On many occasions, Malory shows that it is shameful to attack a tired knight, yet Palomides, Tristram and even Arthur force combat on battle-weary rivals. In at least two instances, Palomides shamefully meets an exhausted opponent. Dinadan counsels him against confronting Lamerok, who has just bested twelve of Morgan's retainers:

> 'Sir Palomides. . .ye shalle not medle with hym by my counceil, for ye shale gete no worship of hym, and for this cause: that ye have sene hym this day have evermuche to done and over-muche travayled.' (601)

Lamerok repeats the caution: "'Fayre knyght. . .of me ye wynne no worshyp, for ye have sene this daye that I have be travayled sore'" (601); and again, "'ye have done me grete wronge and no knyghthode to proffir me batayle, consyderynge my grete travayle'" (602).

Dinadan's warning and Lamerok's condemnation after the battle are found in the French source (Lö., 241), but Malory emphasizes the disgrace by adding Lamerok's admonition before the battle. Having fought to a draw, Palomides is mortified by the realization of what he has done:

> 'For outrageously have I done to you this day, consyderynge the grete dedis of armys I have sene you done, and shamefully and unknyghtly I have requyred you to do batayle with me.' (602)

In the French source, he admits his "trop grant felonnie" and excuses himself because of his "grant ire" (Lö., 242), because Lamerok assumed a quarrel originally claimed by Palomides himself. Malory allows no such justification, and Palomides does not mention his great wrath but dwells on the barbarity of his attack. Malory subtly colours the situation to illustrate Palomides' essential nobility; he finds no excuses for unknightly actions but is suitably repentant.

Like Palomides, Tristram forces the weary Lamerok into battle; however, this episode reflects not the hero's mishandling of the rules of honourable behaviour but his difficult choice between feudal loyalty and knightly courtesy. He chooses to be faithful to the demands of his liege lord even if they are counter to his own convictions. Because the battle takes place before his induction into the fellowship of the Round Table, Tristram's fealty is still due to his uncle, King Mark. Upon Mark's suggestion that Lamerok be "manne-handeled" (428), Tristram declares, "'mesemeth hit were no worshyp for a nobleman to have ado with hym, and for this cause: for at this tyme he hath done overmuche for ony meane knyght lyvynge'" (428). Mark reminds Tristram of both fealty and love: "'I requyre you, as ye love me and my lady the quene La Beale Isode, take youre armys and juste with sir Lameroke de Galis'" (428). Before the joust, Tristram repeats his misgivings:

> 'ye bydde me do a thynge that is ayenste knyghthode. . . .
> But bycause I woll nat displease, as ye requyre me so muste
> I do and obey youre commaundemente.' (428)

After he has unhorsed Lamerok, he apologizes, refusing to fight further: "'I woll no more have ado wyth you, for I have done overmuche unto my dyshonoure and to thy worshyppe'" (429). Significantly, Lamerok's displeasure about the encounter and his resulting hostility to Tristram stem not from Tristram's unknightly conduct in forcing a tired adversary, but in his refusal to allow Lamerok a chance to redeem his honour in hand-to-hand combat.

To emphasize Tristram's nobility and the correctness of his difficult decision, Malory makes major changes in the narrative. The first notable deviation from his source is reflected in Tristram's relationship with Mark. In the French, as in Malory, Mark's jealousy of Tristram's attention to Isode causes the hero to take refuge in the nearby forest (Lδ., 45). However, in the source, Mark is counselled by the devious Andret to seek Tristram's return "pour le faire prendre plus tard par surprise" (Lδ., 46), and Andret prepares a trap or ambush with thirty knights who are hostile to Tristram.

This enmity does not appear in the Morte Darthur. Vinaver remarks in some wonder that Malory "seems to imply that the king was genuinely glad to welcome Tristram back to court."[32] Mark is advised not by the vicious Andret, but by Dynas, Tristram's friend and sometime protector, and by the barons, who in Malory are not opposed to Tristram. They suggest that Tristram should return, not to be deceived and more easily killed, but for the honour and safety of Mark's court: "'And yff he departe frome your courte and go to kyng Arthurs courte, wete you well he woll so frende hym there that he woll nat sette by your malyce'" (427). Without mention of subterfuge, Mark agrees: "'I woll well. . .that he be sent fore, that we may be frendys'" (427).

Tristram returns amid general rejoicing, with no recriminations:

> Than the barounes sente for sir Trystrames undir theire conduyte, and so whan sir Trystrames com to the kynge he was welcom, and no rehersall was made, and than there was game and play. (427)

Malory suppresses the comment that the thirty knights ready to joust at all times during the festivities are, in fact, a ruse engineered by Andret to lure Tristram into an uneven contest.

Because hostilities have ended between them, Tristram has no reason to refuse a direct command from Mark, his liege lord. However, his sense of knightly propriety is offended, and the battle causes him much grief, as is shown in the repetition of his misgivings four times during the encounter. In the French, he undertakes the contest much to his regret, but the long statements on honourable conduct and the subsequent apology to Lamerok are omitted. Malory adds this material to emphasize the outrage inherent in the situation and the honour of his hero in making a difficult decision. He effectively transfers responsibility for the affront to Mark, and no shadow is cast on Tristram's character. Malory does not imply that Tristram makes the wrong decision, and he changes his source significantly to justify the hero's actions. If anything, this passage confirms knightly loyalty as the paramount virtue, while illustrating that adherence to the ideal is not always easy.[33] Joseph R. Ruff explains that "The most serious error a knight can make is knowingly to betray the high order of chivalry by disloyalty to his lady or his lord."[34] Malory emphasizes Tristram's honour in a potentially dishonourable situation by changing the context of the encounter and by accentuating Tristram's remorse for unknightly conduct.

Malory does not transform an unattractive protagonist into a noble hero, for the champion of the French romance is indisputably a knight of prowess. By subtle modifications, however, he emphasizes Tristram's honour and provides him with a sense of courtesy and refinement which, although sometimes present, is not sustained in the French source. Far from symbolizing a debased and recreant chivalry which will eventually destroy the Arthurian dream, Tristram represents the epitome of knightly virtue. Stressing his hero's honourable nature, Malory contrasts his relationship with Isode to the disastrous love of Launcelot and Gwenevere. By doing so, he lessens our condemnation of Tristram's passion, with the result that at the end of the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones," Tristram's worship remains untarnished.

Conclusion

Critical assessment of the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" in Malory's Morte Darthur has been almost uniformly negative. Where earlier scholars such as Chambers and Vinaver condemn the section as an enormous digression from the main interest of the Morte Darthur, later critics posit some kind of connection, usually at the expense of Tristram's character. Contending that the Tristram section provides a vivid contrast to the parts of the work which deal with Launcelot, modern commentators such as Moorman and Fries attempt to prove that Tristram is not a hero but an embodiment of misdirected chivalry, that his honour is deliberately debased and degraded.

A close analysis of Malory's text, however, indicates that little evidence exists to support their viewpoint. It is true that Malory establishes Mark's court as a foil to Arthur's glorious kingdom, but the villainy of his milieu never contaminates Tristram; in fact, Malory consciously manipulates his source to cast his hero in a favourable light. Without exception, in episode after episode Tristram's character emerges as more noble than in the French romance. In situations that have the potential of bringing shame upon Tristram and that might detract from his heroic stature, Malory provides motivation for his hero's actions, thereby erasing any hint of dishonour. In episodes where, in the French romance, Tristram displays his nobility and prowess, Malory stresses the hero's honour. Such consistent shaping is neither accidental nor unconscious.

Deliberately ennobling his hero, Malory regularly provides connections which link the "Book of Sir Tristram" to the rest of the Morte Darthur. Although the Tristram section does not significantly advance the tale of Arthur's birth, rise and fall, it is tied thematically to the rest of the work, first and most importantly, by the emphasis upon shame and honour. Tristram, like other noble knights, attempts to live by the Arthurian code established at the founding of the Round Table. Although his decisions may be more complex and difficult than those presented to knights in earlier books, he nevertheless responds with courtesy and honour, even when involved in situations where the choice is not obvious; he becomes the epitome of chivalry, for a time surpassing even the mighty Launcelot in fame. In prowess he is Launcelot's equal; where they appear at a tournament together, they usually share the accolades. Both instances of single combat between these two champions result in a draw. In a passage original to Malory, the narrator comments on their equality:

> Than was sir Trystrames called the strengyst knyght of the worlde, for he was called bygger than sir Launcelotte, but sir Launcelot was bettir brethid. (415)

Exemplifying the best of chivalry and opposing all enemies of true knighthood, Tristram complements the noble Launcelot.

In contrast to these two great knights of worship, Malory supplies ample evidence in the "Book of Sir Tristram" that the wasteland beyond Arthur's sphere of influence is populated with shameful and recreant individuals unworthy of calling themselves knights. Surrounded by cowards in a court lacking honour, Mark of Cornwall symbolizes the evil and dishonour which lurk at the fringes of Arthurian society. Whereas King Mark repeatedly demonstrates his shame and dishonour, Tristram responds with noble courtesy to difficult situations.

Ironically, the collapse of Arthur's ideal order comes about through shameful actions within rather than through assaults from without his glorious fellowship. Tristram may be Launcelot's equal on the battlefield, but the similarity ends with respect to their morality. Because Mark's unworthiness invalidates the necessity of Tristram's allegiance, there is no difficult conflict between love and loyalty. Moreover, Malory expresses no direct condemnation of Tristram's involvement with Isode; any dislike of their relationship can be deduced only from passages dealing not with the adultery in Cornwall but with the adultery at Camelot. Launcelot chooses fidelity to Gwenevere over loyalty to Arthur, thereby contributing to the death of the glorious Arthurian dream. After the catastrophe he renounces his illicit love, purging himself of his sin by prayer and fasting. In contrast, Tristram never repents of his passion for Isode; the only disaster in their relationship remains Tristram's murder by the shameful Mark.

Tristram's death concludes his story with a personal tragedy, for unlike the hero of the poems he is not a noble knight forced into dishonourable behaviour by forces beyond his control. Instead, he retains his honour to the end, the pity in his death resulting from his untimely and shameful murder. Launcelot's destiny, on the other hand, is intertwined with the social order of which he is an integral part; the disastrous consequences of his love extend far beyond the three people involved in the affair. Although sympathetic to Launcelot, Malory severely condemns his relationship with Gwenevere by introducing a spiritual dimension not present in Tristram's character. Launcelot faces a harsher judgement for his sins because of the larger repercussions of his adultery.

Malory's artistic purpose may partially explain this double standard: Tristram lives and dies as an independent knight,[1] but Launcelot represents the best of knighthood in the Arthurian order; his sins are public as well as private. Because he is the best worldly knight who transgresses against the most noble Christian king, his conduct is more reprehensible than Tristram's. Tristram, too, however, eventually becomes part of Arthur's society. Condemnation of his adulterous relationship may be softened by his nobility in contrast to Mark's treachery, but the fact remains that Arthur and his society accept and condone Tristram and Isode's illicit relationship. Undeniably, Malory's viewpoint differs when dealing with Launcelot's adultery, an inconsistency that reflects the author's moral ambiguity.

The problem of Malory's apparent lack of consistency in the treatment of the two love triangles may be illuminated by an examination of the relationship between honour and goodness. Because Tristram is an honourable knight, does it follow that he is also a morally good knight? D. S. Brewer addresses this question in his discussion of Malory criticism, but he provides no answers; it is, in his words, an area that "waits for its scholars."[2] Julian Pitt-Rivers, also, deals with the dilemma in a general way in his investigation of honour and social status.[3] Where honour is perceived as reputation, it cannot be equated with goodness. Pitt-Rivers observes, for example, that intentional deceit can be quite honourable, but to be called a liar in public is a "grave affront."[4] As both R. T. Davies and S. Miko suggest, the shame for a treacherous act or sin is not so much for the sin itself as for its disclosure.[5] Janet Wilson comments, "Where preserving honour takes priority, acting a lie is made acceptable."[6]

How the difference between honour and virtue is reflected in Tristram's character and what significance this disparity has in considering Tristram as a hero are questions which arise from this discussion of Tristram's honour. Any investigation of honour and right in the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" must first deal, however, with the characterization of Tristram, who is neither debased nor degraded but ennobled as one of the finest representatives of chivalry. All readers, general as well as scholarly, should heed King Arthur's words:

> 'And may we all, kyngis and knyghtes and men of worship, sey that sir Trystram may be called a noble knyght and one of the beste knyghtes that ever y saw dayes of my lyff.' (535)

Notes to Introduction

[1] Helaine Newstead, "The Origin and Growth of the Tristan Legend," in Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages: A Collaborative History, ed. R. S. Loomis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 122; hereafter cited as ALMA. See also R. S. Loomis, Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 42.

[2] The English spelling "Tristram" will be used throughout this thesis. In the Welsh manuscripts the name usually appears as "Drystan mab Tallwch," although "Tristan" occasionally appears in medieval Welsh. In the French romances, "Tristan" is the normal spelling.

[3] "The Dream of Rhonabwy," in The Mabinogian, trans. Gwyn Jones and Thomas Jones (London: Dent and New York: Dutton, 1949; rpt. 1968), pp. 137-52. See also Rachel Bromwich, Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Welsh Triads (Cardiff: Univ. of Wales Press, 1961), Triad 19, p. 33; Triad 21, p. 37; Triad 26, pp. 45ff.; Triad 71, p. 189; Triad 72, p. 192; Triad 73, p. 193; "The Twenty-Four Knights of Arthur's Court," p. 252.

[4] H. Zimmer, "Beitrage zur Namenforschung in den altfranz Arthurpen, 'Tristan, Isolt, Marc,'" Zeitschrift für Französische Sprache und Literatur, 13 (1891), 67. For more recent comments see Rachel Bromwich, Trioedd Ynys Prydein, pp. 329ff. Dry(u)stan son of Tallwch is as close to Drust(an) filius Tallorcan as is possible when translating from one language to another.

[5] Sigmund Eisner, The Tristan Legend: A Study in Sources (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 33. Eisner cites the agreement of major critics such as Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis, J. D. Bruce, R. S. Loomis, Rachel Bromwich and Helaine Newstead.

[6] Eisner, pp. 52-54.

[7] Isabel Henderson, The Picts (New York, Washington: F. R. Praeger, 1967), p. 31.

[8] Henderson, p. 94.

[9] Eisner, p. 53.

[10] Eisner, pp. 20-21; Henderson, pp. 40-41.

[11] J. D. Bruce, The Evolution of Arthurian Romance From the Beginnings Down to the Year 1300, 2nd ed. (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1958), I, 69.

[12] K. H. Jackson, "The Pictish Language," in *The Problem of the Picts*, ed. F. T. Wainwright (Perth: Melven Press, 1980), pp. 129-60. See also Henderson, pp. 29-31.

[13] Henderson, pp. 31-33.

[14] See Newstead, p. 127: "The nucleus of the Tristan legend, then, was a tradition that Drust delivered a foreign land from forced tribute and rescued the intended victim, a princess who later succeeded in identifying the hero in a bath, thus confounding false claimants to the victory. Since a version of this story was written down in the Irish *Wooing of Emer* in the tenth century, this part of the legend must have been in circulation as early as the ninth century."

[15] The date of "The Dream of Rhonabwy" is tentatively set at 1220-1225. See I. L. Foster, "*Culhwch and Olwen* and *Rhonabwy's Dream*," in *ALMA*, p. 41.

[16] The oldest triads are found in the thirteenth-century manuscript known as Peniarth 16. See Rachel Bromwich, "The Welsh Triads," in *ALMA*, p. 44.

[17] Bromwich, "The Welsh Triads," p. 44.

[18] Bromwich, "The Welsh Triads," p. 46; also *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, p. xvii.

[19] Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis, *Tristan and Isolt: A Study of the Sources of the Romance*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt, 1913; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1960).

[20] Eisner's study claims classical sources for the various aspects of the Tristram legend. Bruce questions the extent of indebtedness to Celtic sources, preferring to credit "individual invention and purely literary origins" for the romance (I, v).

[21] Bruce, I, 68.

[22] Newstead, p. 128.

[23] R. S. Loomis, "The Oral Diffusion of the Arthurian Legend," in *ALMA*, p. 60.

[24] Newstead, p. 122.

[25] R. S. Loomis, "A Survey of Tristan Scholarship after 1911," in *Tristan and Isolt: A Study of the Sources of the Romance*, by G. S. Loomis, p. 581.

[26] Bruce, I, 115.

[27] Eugene Vinaver, Le Roman de Tristan et Iseult dans l'Oeuvre de Thomas Malory (Paris: Champion, 1925), p. 99. See also Frederick Whitehead, "The Early Tristan Poems," in ALMA, pp. 136ff.

[28] G. S. Loomis, I, 8.

[29] G. S. Loomis, I, 115.

[30] Chrétien de Troyes, Arthurian Romances, trans. W. W. Comfort (London: Dent, New York: Dutton, 1914; rpt. 1968), p. 91: "He who wrote of Eric and Enide, and translated into French the commands of Ovid and the Art of Love, and wrote the Shoulder Bite, and about King Mark and the fair Iseut. . . ."

[31] Jean Frappier, "Chrétien de Troyes," in ALMA, p. 159.

[32] Joseph Bédier, ed. Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas: Poème du XII^{e} Siècle (Paris: Didot, 1902; rpt. n.d.), II, 168-71.

[33] G. S. Loomis, I, 183.

[34] Whitehead, p. 137.

[35] Throughout the discussion of the Tristram poems I am indebted to the articles by Newstead, Whitehead and Vinaver in ALMA.

[36] Ernest Hoepffner, "The Breton Lais," in ALMA, p. 116.

[37] Gottfried von Strassburg, Tristan, with the 'Tristan' of Thomas, trans. A. T. Hatto (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960; rpt. 1969, p. 43; "I am well aware that there have been many who have told the tale of Tristan; yet there have not been many who have read his tale aright. . . . they did not write according to the authentic version as told by Thomas of Britain, who was a master romancer. . . ."

[38] W. T. H. Jackson, "Gottfried von Strassburg," in ALMA, p. 145.

[39] Whitehead, p. 143.

[40] A. T. Hatto, Introduction, Tristan, with the 'Tristan' of Thomas, by Gottfried von Strassburg (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960; rpt. 1969), p. 17.

[41] Phillip M. Mitchell, "Scandinavian Literature," in ALMA, p. 465.

[42] Robert W. Ackerman, "The English Rimed and Prose Romances," in ALMA, p. 514.

[43] Few editions of the Middle English Sir Tristrem have been produced. I use McNeill's edition produced for the Scottish Text Society: Sir Tristrem, ed. G. P. McNeill (Edinburgh and London: Wm. Blackwood & Sons, 1886).

[44] R. S. Loomis, Introduction, The Romance of Tristram and Ysolt (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), p. xxiv.

[45] A. B. Taylor, Introduction to Medieval Romance (London: Heath, Cranton, 1930), p. 158.

[46] Thomas C. Rumble, "The Middle English Sir Tristrem: Toward a Reappraisal," Comparative Literature, 11 (1959), 228.

[47] Cedric E. Pickford, "Sir Tristrem, Sir Walter Scott and Thomas," in Studies in Medieval Literature and Languages in Memory of Frederick Whitehead (New York: Barnes and Noble; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), p. 228.

[48] Pickford, p. 228.

[49] Rumble, p. 223; Pickford, p. 228.

[50] Quoted in R. S. Loomis, Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art, p. 42.

[51] R. S. Loomis, Arthurian Legends, p. 42.

[52] R. S. Loomis, Arthurian Legends, p. 57.

[53] R. S. Loomis, Arthurian Legends, p. 57. See also Vinaver, Le Roman, p. 91: "Le roman de Tristan n'a pas été connu de Malory sous sa forme originale: il lui est parvenu dans un version en prose, tardive et corrompue, voire même contraire à l'espirit et à la lettre du Tristan primitif."

[54] Larry D. Benson, Malory's 'Morte Darthur' (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 7. See also Renée L. Curtis, Tristan Studies (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1969), pp. 66-76.

[55] Curtis, Studies, p. 66.

[56] Curtis, Studies, pp. 66ff; Bruce, p. 485; E. Baumgartner, 'Le Tristan en Prose': Essai D'interprétation d'un Roman Médiéval (Geneva: Droz, 1975), pp. 29ff. Baumgartner disagrees with the conventional acceptance of two versions and claims that differences make the manuscripts impossible to classify.

[57] Cited in Baumgartner, p. 96.

[58] Vinaver, "The Prose Tristan," in ALMA, p. 339.

[59] Vinaver, "The Prose Tristan," pp. 340-41; Bruce, I, 489-95; Baumgartner, pp. 101ff.

[60] Renée L. Curtis, Introduction, Le Roman de Tristan en Prose (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1963), I, 9.

[61] Curtis, Introduction, p. 8.

[62] Bruce, I, 484.

[63] P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the *Morte*," in *Essays on Malory*, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 68.

[64] Vinaver, Commentary, *Works* by Thomas Malory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947; rpt. 1967), III, 1460.

[65] After Theseus kills the Minotaur, he returns home, having promised that his ship would carry white sails if he had been successful and black sails if he had not. Overcome by grief at the loss of Ariadne, he forgets his promise. His father, King Aegeus, believing his son to be dead, hurls himself from the Acropolis and dies. For an interesting discussion linking this episode in the poems to classical mythology, see Eisner, pp. 150-55.

[66] Vinaver, *Le Roman*, p. 110.

[67] C. D. Benson, "Gawain's Defense of Lancelot in Malory's Death of Arthur," *Modern Language Review*, 78 (1983), 267.

[68] Vinaver, *Le Roman*, p. 18.

[69] Vinaver, *Le Roman*, p. 50.

[70] Maria Rosa Lida de Malkiel, "Arthurian Literature in Spain and Portugal," in *ALMA*, p. 410.

[71] Cedric E. Pickford, ed. *Tristan, 1489* (London: Scholar Press, 1976).

[72] *Le Roman de Tristan en Prose*, ed. Renée Curtis, vol. I (Munich: Max Heuber Verlag, 1963); vol. II (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976).

[73] Eilert Löseth, compiler, *Le Roman en Prose de Tristan, Le Roman de Palamède et La Compilation de Rusticien de Pise: Analyse Critique d'après les Manuscrits de Paris* (Paris: Emile Bouillon, 1891); hereafter cited in the text immediately following the quotation.

[74] Vinaver, *Le Roman*, p. 19.

[75] Vinaver, *Le Roman*, p. 19.

[76] Vinaver, *Le Roman*, p. 20.

[77] Curtis, *Studies*, p. 10.

[78] Walter Scott, intro., *Sir Tristrem: A Metrical Romance of the Thirteenth Century, Edited from Auchinleck Ms* (Archibald Constable,

1804), p. lxxx.

[79] Vinaver, "The Prose Tristan," p. 546.

[80] Vinaver, Le Roman, p. 15.

[81] Vinaver, Le Roman, p. 16.

[82] Vinaver, Le Roman, p. 16.

[83] Vinaver, Le Roman, p. 17.

[84] E. K. Chambers, Sir Thomas Malory, English Association Pamphlet No. 51 (1922; rpt. Folcroft, Penn.: Folcroft Library Editions, 1971), p. 4.

[85] Chambers, p. 5.

[86] Chambers, p. 5.

[87] Eugene Vinaver, Malory (Oxford, 1929; rpt. Folcroft, Penn.: Folcroft Library Editions, 1977), p. 55.

[88] Vinaver, Le Roman, p. 129.

[89] Robert Graves, Introduction, Malory's Le Morte Darthur, ed. Keith Baines (New York: Clarkson Potter, 1962), p. xvi.

[90] Stephen Knight, The Structure of Sir Thomas Malory's Arthuriad, Australian Humanities Research Council Monograph No. 14 (Adelaide: Sydney University Press, 1969), p. 45.

[91] Charles R. Saunders and Charles E. Ward, Introduction, The Morte Darthur (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1940), p. xviii. This edition includes Malory's version of the love story itself but omits all the rest of the Tristram section.

[92] Vida D. Scudder, Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory: A Study of the Book and Its Sources (1917; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1965), p. 229.

[93] Maureen Fries, "Malory's Tristram as Counter-hero to the Morte Darthur," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 76 (1975), 605.

[94] D. S. Brewer, "the hoole book," in Essays on Malory, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 55.

[95] Chambers, p. 4.

[96] Scudder, p. 229.

[97] Scudder, pp. 226-27.

[98] Thomas C. Rumble, "'The Tale of Tristram': Development by Analogy," in Malory's Originality: A Critical Study of 'Le Morte Darthur,' ed. R. M. Lumiansky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), p. 164.

[99] Brewer, p. 55.

[100] Fries, p. 605.

[101] Rumble, p. 175. For an excellent discussion of the importance of the Lot-Pellinore feud, see Rumble, pp. 169-80.

[102] Charles Moorman, "Courtly Love in Malory," English Literary History, 27 (1960), 163.

[103] Evelyn Leigh Effland, "Plot, Character, Theme: A Critical Study of Malory's Works," Diss. Denver 1964, p. 74.

[104] L. D. Benson, p. viii.

[105] Chambers, p. 8.

[106] L. D. Benson, p. 109.

[107] Vinaver, Le Roman, p. 140.

[108] L. D. Benson, p. 109.

[109] D. S. Brewer and T. Takamiya, eds., Aspects of Malory (Cambridge: Brewer, 1981), p.5.

[110] D. S. Brewer, Introduction, The Morte Darthur: Parts Seven and Eight (London, 1968; rpt. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1972), p. 25.

[111] Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status," in Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society, ed. J. G. Peristiany (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), p. 21.

[112] Sir Thomas Malory, Works, ed. E. Vinaver, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947; rpt. 1967), p. 396; hereafter cited by page number only following the quotation.

[113] Pitt-Rivers, pp. 17, 30, 36.

[114] Brewer, Introduction, The Morte Darthur, p. 26.

[115] Brewer, Introduction, pp. 25-26. For a discussion of the importance of "blood" or lineage to Malory, see Stephen J. Miko, "Malory and the Chivalric Order," Medium Aevum, 35 (1966), 211.

[116] P. Bennett, "The Tournaments in the Prose De Tristan," Romanische Forschungen, 87 (1975), 336.

[117] John Lawlor, Introduction, Sir Thomas Malory: Le Morte Darthur, ed. Janet Cowan (Harmondsworth, Mddx.: Penguin, 1969), I, xvi.

[118] L. D. Benson, p. 151.

[119] Tucker, p. 64.

[120] Effland, p. 8.

[121] L. D. Benson, p. 134.

[122] James W. Spisak, ed., Caxton's Malory (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), II, 606.

[123] See Rumble, p. 131: ". . .if a given aspect of Malory's treatment is not to be found in any of the other versions, we may be at least a little surer than at present in ascribing that deviation to Malory's own invention." Rumble suggests that Malory's redaction be compared not only with the French prose Tristan, but with the Spanish Cuento de Tristan and the Italian Leggenda di Tristano. Such a comparison is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, Rumble's point still holds true in relation to the numerous manuscripts of the French prose romance.

[124] Spisak, p. 606.

[125] Rumble, p. 143.

[126] Caxton, Prologue, Caxton's Malory, ed. J. W. Spisak, I, 2.

[127] Vinaver, Le Roman, pp. 109-110.

[128] L. D. Benson, p. vii.

[129] Vinaver, "The Prose Tristan," p. 546.

[130] Cf. Scudder, who contends that "Tristram is a lover, first, last, and always" (227). Her perceptions of Malory's Tristram are clearly affected by her familiarity with the poetic tradition, as this assessment illustrates: "Tristram may be in every particular all that a knight should be, --may slay the Morholt and redeem the land, may joust right valiantly, may seek by incessant exploits to win his place at the Round Table. We watch him indifferently--rousing to interest only when, insolent and ardent in his hunter's green, he seizes his harp and enters the presence of Iseult" (229).

[131] Brewer, Introduction, p. 25.

[132] R. M. Lumiansky, Introduction, Malory's Originality: A Critical Study of 'Le Morte Darthur' (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), p. 7.

Notes to Chapter I

[1] See the chapter entitled "Le Poème Primitif" in *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas: Poeme du XII^{e} Siècle*, ed. Joseph Bédier (Paris: Didot, 1902), pp. 194-306. See also the reconstruction of Eilhart's poem in Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis, *Tristan and Isolt: A Study of the Sources of the Romance* (1913; rpt. New York: B. Franklin, 1960), pp. 11-63.

[2] FitzRoy Richard Somerset, Lord Raglan, *The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama* (New York: Vintage Books, 1956; rpt. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975), p. 174. All references to Raglan in the forthcoming discussion refer to the list of heroic attributes provided by Raglan on the cited page.

[3] C. M. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry* (London: Macmillan, 1952), p. 118.

[4] Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan, with the 'Tristan' of Thomas*, trans. A. T. Hatto (Harmondsworth, Mddx.: Penguin, 1960; rpt. 1969), p. 293.

[5] Bowra, p. 119.

[6] Tristram is a chivalric hero in the poems as well, especially in Gottfried's work; however, the emphasis is on his tragic obsession with Isode rather than on his knightly deeds.

[7] Renée L. Curtis, *Tristan Studies* (Munich: Fink, 1969, p. 11; see also Eugene Vinaver, *Le Roman de Tristan et Iseult dans l'Oeuvre de Thomas Malory* (Paris: Champion, 1925), p. 5.

[8] W. T. H. Jackson, *The Anatomy of Love: The Tristan of Gottfried von Strassburg* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 16.

[9] G. S. Loomis, p. 11.

[10] Gottfried, p. 46.

[11] Thomas C. Rumble, "'The Tale of Tristram': Development by Analogy," in *Malory's Originality: A Critical Study of 'Le Morte Darthur,'* ed. R. M. Lumiansky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), pp. 131-33. Rumble points out that the Italian *Leggenda di Tristano* begins *in media res*, just like Malory's work. He suggests that Malory's French source may well have begun in exactly the same way.

[12] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1456.

[13] Malory explains the etymology of Tristram's name. Elyzabeth says to her new-born son: ". . .bycause I shall dye of the byrth of the, I charge my jantyll woman that she pray my lorde, the kynge Melyodas, that whan he is crystened let calle hym Trystrams, that is as muche to say as a sorowfull byrth" (372). The prose *Tristan* supplies a similar derivation: "Triste vig ci et en tristor acochai, et la premiere feste que je ai eüe puis que je acochai est tournee en tristor et en dolor. Et quant por tristece iés en terre venuz, tu auras de ta premiere aventure non; car de moi triste et de tristece seras apelez Tristans." See *Le Roman de Tristan en Prose*, ed. Renée L. Curtis (Munich: Hueber, 1963), I, paragraph 229; hereafter cited in the text as Curtis and paragraph number only following the quotation.

Eilhart comments that "Rivalen, exceeding sorrowful, gave his son the name Tristan" (G. S. Loomis, p. 12). Thomas, too, links Tristram's name with his sorrowful beginnings: "Then was he cleped Tristram and christened with that name; and for this reason gat he that name that he was begotten in sorrow and malady, born and brought forth with grimly pains, and dolorous was all his life." See *The Romance of Tristram and Ysolt by Thomas of Britain*, trans. R. S. Loomis (Dutton, 1923; rpt. New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), p. 18.

[14] Curtis, *Studies*, p. 13.

[15] Joan M. Ferrante, *The Conflict of Love and Honour: The Medieval Tristan Legend in France, Germany and Italy* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), p. 36.

[16] Ferrante, p. 34.

[17] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton University Press, 1957; rpt. New York: Atheneum, 1969), p. 188.

[18] Melyodas' second marriage presents an interesting parallel to Tristram's later marriage to the daughter of King Howell of Brittany, Isode White Hands.

[19] Bowra, p. 95.

[20] Jackson, p. 37. See also G. S. Loomis, p. 12.

[21] Bowra, p. 95.

[22] G. S. Loomis, p. 287.

[23] Edgar De Bruyne, *Études D'Esthétique Médiévale* (1946; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine, 1975), I, 64.

[24] De Bruyne, I, 312.

[25] De Bruyne, I, 307-09.

[26] Bowra, p. 91.

[27] In the Middle English *Sir Tristrem* and in Gottfried's poem, Tristrem returns first to Leonis where he defeats the usurper who killed his father. Having settled matters at home, he returns to Cornwall. See *Sir Tristrem*, ed. George P. McNeill (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood, 1886), ll. 805-902; also Gottfried, pp. 111-20.

[28] G. S. Loomis, p. 14.

[29] Gottfried, p. 132.

[30] Jackson, p. 38.

[31] G. S. Loomis, p. 338.

[32] See Larry D. Benson, *Malory's Morte Darthur* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 117. Benson wrongly claims that Malory creates a new role for Marhalt in making him a famous knight of the Round Table. While Malory may emphasize Marhalt's connection to Arthur's court, there is no question that the Irish champion is one of the Round Table fellowship in the prose *Tristan*. When Tristram is welcomed to Arthur's court, he occupies Marhalt's vacant seat (Lö., 206).

[33] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1457.

[34] Cf. Gottfried, pp. 126-28.

[35] G. S. Loomis, p. 18.

[36] *Sir Tristrem*, ll. 1352-53; Gottfried, p. 154.

[37] Paris, B. N. MS. Fr. 103 includes Tristram's battle with the serpent/dragon. Most of the printed texts are based on this manuscript, and Vinaver identifies it as similar to the source which Malory used for part of the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" (Commentary, p. 1455). However, the manuscript which Malory followed obviously substituted the judicial battle for the supernatural combat.

[38] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1456.

[39] Gottfried, pp. 173-83.

[40] Bowra, p. 99.

[41] In *Sir Tristrem*, Tristram overthrows the usurper who killed his father and drove him into exile as a child (ll. 848-902). His first action after establishing his rightful claim to the kingdom involves the creation of a legal code:

Tvo ȝere he sett þat land,
His lawes made he cri (903-04)

[42] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1456.

[43] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1510. Vinaver states that only the Middle English *Sir Tristrem* and Malory's *Morte Darthur* in the literary tradition place Tristram as the founder of the rituals involved in venery; however, medieval handbooks on hunting, notably *The Book of St. Albans* (1486) make similar claims. Vinaver directs the reader to the article by François Remigereau, "Tristan 'Maitre de Venerie' dans la tradition anglaise et dans le roman de Tristan (sic)," *Romania*, 58 (1932), 218-37. In this article, Remigereau discusses the connection between Malory and *The Book of St. Albans*, concluding that the latter must be a compilation of much older treatises. He compares references to hunting in the Middle English *Sir Tristrem* and in Thomas' poem, claiming that Thomas mentioned Tristram's relationship to hunting first. Remigereau fails to differentiate between Thomas' Tristram, who is well versed in hunting lore, and the English Tristram, who is its originator. He draws no conclusions as to the ultimate source of Tristram's connection with the hunt. Tristram's hunting prowess is mentioned in early hunting manuals; see, for example, Gaston Phebus, *Phebus de Foys le Livre de la Chasse*, Facs. ed. B. N. MS fr. 616. Graz: Akademische Druck-u-verlagsanstalt, 1976, and *The Boke of St. Albans* in *English Hawking and Hunting in the Boke of St. Albans*, ed. Rachel Hands (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

[44] Marcelle Thiébaux, *The Stag of Love: The Chase in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), pp. 27-32.

[45] Thiébaux, pp. 128-43.

[46] Gottfried, pp. 78-86.

[47] *Sir Tristrem*, ll. 458-527.

[48] *Sir Tristrem*, ll. 296-97.

[49] G. S. Loomis, pp. 32-33.

[50] The next sentence, "Amen, sayde sir Thomas Malleorré," may be a scribe's ironical remark, as suggested by Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1510. I prefer D. C. Muecke's opinion cited in Vinaver's discussion; Muecke believes that Malory added these words: "the *amen* is exactly what one would expect from Malory himself."

[51] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1456.

[52] Jackson, p. 40.

[53] Bowra, p. 100.

[54] Bowra, p. 101.

[55] Helaine Newstead, "The Tryst beneath the Tree: An Episode in the Tristan Legend," Romance Philology, 9 (1956), 269.

[56] The motif of the blood-stained sheets appears prior to this incident, in Tristram's affair with Sir Segwardes' wife (p. 394).

[57] Joseph Campbell, The Hero With a Thousand Faces, 2nd ed. (1949, 1968; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

[58] Sir Tristrem, ll. 892-95, 901-02.

[59] G. S. Loomis, p. 33.

[60] Gottfried, pp. 258-68.

[61] See W. T. H. Jackson, The Hero and the King: An Epic Theme (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982). Jackson discusses the theme of "the opposition between settled ruler and independent warrior" in early Western Literature (p. 1). Like Beowulf, Tristram is an "intruder" in a court which reflects an unsuccessful administration. Hrothgar treats Beowulf more kindly than Mark responds to Tristram, but Jackson contends that the Danish king is relieved at the hero's departure. Jackson traces the conflict between king and hero and identifies this tension as a common theme in heroic tales.

[62] See Jackson, Anatomy, pp. 1-30 for an excellent discussion of the medieval debate on amor sine concupiscentia.

[63] Gottfried, pp. 194-95.

[64] G. S. Loomis, p. 22.

[65] Curtis, Studies, p. 22.

[66] Ferrante, p. 40.

[67] Jackson, p. 40.

[68] Curtis, Studies, p. 38.

[69] Bowra, p. 130.

[70] See, for example, the start of the hunt in the tapestries dealing with the Hunt of the Unicorn, reproduced in Thiébaux, p. 30.

[71] Compare with Jackson's recreation of the ancient legend of Tristan and Isolde, according to G. S. Loomis' study. "The love affair ends in tragedy when Isolde's husband revenges himself on his wife's lover, as he was perfectly entitled to do, and Tristan in his turn strangles the woman whose desires had brought misery to all who came in contact with her" (Jackson, p. 34).

[72] L. D. Benson, p. 110.

Notes to Chapter II

[1] Thomas C. Rumble, "'The Tale of Tristram': Development by Analogy," in *Malory's Originality: A Critical Study of 'Le Morte Darthur,'* ed. R. M. Lumiansky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), pp. 147-49.

[2] Compare Alexander the Orphan's response to Morgan le Fay's attempted seduction:

> 'A Jesu defende me,' seyde sir Alysaundir, 'frome suche pleasure! For I had levir kut away my hangers than I wolde do her ony suche pleasure!' (643)

Morgan is an enchantress, and Alexander reacts in standard fashion to her lustful demands; however, she is also depicted throughout the *Morte Darthur* as a dishonourable lady in terms of Malory's conception of chivalry. No noble knight wishes to become involved with a woman who is recognized as shameful.

[3] Edgar De Bruyne, *Études D'Esthétique Médiévale* (1946; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine, 1975), III, 98.

[4] Eileen B. Hennessy, trans., *The Esthetics of the Middle Ages*, by Edgar De Bruyne (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1969), p. 52.

[5] D. S. Brewer, "The Ideal of Feminine Beauty in Medieval Literature, Especially 'Harley Lyrics,' Chaucer, and Some Elizabethans," *Modern Language Review*, 50 (1955), 257-69.

[6] Hennessy, pp. 12-13. The late Roman philosophers extolled the golden mean, all things in moderation. Descriptions of ideal human beauty follow this maxim. See also p. 55: "Light is universally regarded as a source of beauty." The heroine frequently shines "as bright as a sunbeam, and her forehead by day gives more light than the moon by night" (Brewer, "The Ideal," p. 260).

[7] Brewer, "The Ideal," p. 267.

[8] Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan with the 'Tristan' of Thomas*, ed. A. T. Hatto (Harmondsworth, Mddx.: Penguin, 1960; rpt. 1969), pp. 150-51.

[9] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1532.

[10] Tristram obviously feels no compulsion to be near Isode continually, as he does in the poetic tradition. The narrator comments, ". . . and than he toke hys horse and rode from contrey to contrey, and all straunge adventures he encheved wheresomever he rode. . . .And ever be-

twene sir Trystram resorted unto Joyus Garde whereas La Beall Isode was, that lovid hym ever" (784-85). Tristram apparently visits Joyous Gard whenever he finds himself between adventures, but his primary duty is what P. E. Tucker calls the "disinterested pursuit of knight errantry." See Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," in Essays on Malory, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 75.

[11] W. T. H. Jackson, The Anatomy of Love: The Tristan of Gottfried von Strassburg (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 45.

[12] R. L. Curtis, "The Character of Iseut in the Prose Tristan (Parts I and II)," in Melanges de Littérature Du Moyen Age au xx^{e} Siècle Offerts à Mlle. Jeanne Lods (Paris: École Normale Supérieure de Jeunes Filles, 1978), p. 182.

[13] Rumble, pp. 141-43.

[14] Lö., 60; Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1469. Vinaver points out that in the source, "Isode's letter, far from being a polite invitation. . .is a complaint reminiscent of the early Tristan poems: 'Amy Tristan, ce change m'occist et tue, et je seuffre tout le mal que chetif coeur peut souffrir.'"

[15] See the article by Curtis for a full discussion of Isode's character in the French Tristan.

[16] Friederike Wiesmann-Wiedemann, "From Victim to Villain: King Mark," in The Expansion and Transformations of Courtly Literature, ed. N. B. Smith and J. T. Snow (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980), pp. 49-68. This article presents a concise comparison of Mark's character in Eilhart, Thomas and the French prose Tristan.

[17] Rumble, p. 153.

[18] Lö., 23. Löseth notes that no reason is provided for Mark's fear of Tristram. See also Rumble, p. 155.

[19] Rumble, p. 157.

[20] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1458.

[21] Rumble, p. 158.

[22] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1450.

[23] Rumble, p. 158.

[24] The necessity of decorum in all matters was an important concept in the Middle Ages. Just as the members of a beautiful body must be in proportion to one another, relationships must also be proportionate. De

Bruyne quotes Saint Bonaventure: "rien n'est plus beau. . .que l'egalité dans la pluralité" (III, 206). The marriage between Mark and Isode was not a union of equals; his dishonour could never harmonize with her nobility.

[25] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1487.

[26] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1488.

[27] The phrase "il ne saurait distinguer l'or du quoivre" recalls Mark's response in the poems to Brangwen and then Isode on his wedding night. In the poems, Mark takes his pleasure with Brangwen first and then with Isode, never noticing the difference. The poets condemn him for failing to distinguish between brass and gold. See, for example, Gottfried, p. 207.

[28] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1489.

[29] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1957; rpt. 1966), p. 46.

[30] Kantorowicz, p. 318.

[31] Kantorowicz, p. 47.

[32] Kantorowicz, p. 49.

[33] Kantorowicz, p. 318.

[34] E. K. Chambers, Sir Thomas Malory, English Association Pamphlet No. 51 (1922; rpt. Folcroft Library Editions, 1971), p. 5.

[35] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1461.

[36] Evelyn Leigh Effland, "Plot, Character, Theme: A Critical Study of Malory's Works," Diss. University of Denver 1964, p. 74.

[37] Tristram bears witness to Palomides' prowess: "And well I wote ye ar a good knyght, for I have seyne you preved, and many grete entirpryses ye have done and well enchyeved them" (697).

[38] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1520.

[39] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1523.

[40] See Scudder, p. 244 and p. 253.

[41] The fact that the fate of an unbaptized soul should be discussed on page 666 of Malory's Works is an interesting coincidence, for according to Revelation xiii.16, 666 is the number of the beast, the Anti-Christ.

[42] In contrast, Launcelot's death reflects his blessed state: "So whan syr Bors and his felowes came to his bedde they founde hym starke dede; and he laye as he had smyled, and the swettest savour aboute hym that ever they felte" (1258).

[43] Prior to his battle with the usurpers, Helyus and Helake of the Red City, Palomides declares, "'but as yet I wolde nat dye or that I were full crystynde. And yette so aferde am I nat of you bothe but that I shall dye a bettir Crystyn man than ony of you bothe'" (718). This speech does not occur in the French source.

[44] Muriel Whitaker, Arthur's Kingdom of Adventure: The World of Malory's Morte Darthur (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1984), pp. 19-20. Whitaker discusses the demonic nature of Lucius' army in Arthur's continental war. The large enemy force consists of kings, dukes and noble admirals with their "horryble peple," including demon-bred giants and Saracens. Arthur instructs Cadore to take no prisoners, "'for they that woll accompany them with Sarezens, the man that wolde save them were lytyll to prayse. And therefore sle downe and save nother hethyn nothir chrystyn'" (224).

[45] Whitaker differentiates between the cyclic time in the forest of adventures and the linear time of Arthur's biography. She observes that Tristram and Palomides "alone remain in cyclical time, the one by returning to Isode at the Joyous Gard, the other by continuing his pursuit of the questing beast, rather than moving into the linear time of the Grail Quest" (p. 110).

[46] Fitzroy Richard Somerset, Lord Raglan, The Hero, A Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama (1956; rpt. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975), pp. 209-13.

[47] E. Vinaver, Le Roman de Tristan et Iseult dans l'Oeuvre de Thomas Malory (Paris: Champion, 1925), p. 144.

[48] Dinadan teases Bagdemagus about his advanced age and his value as a knight (Lö., 282d, p. 197).

[49] D. S. Brewer, Introduction, The Morte Darthur: Parts Seven and Eight (1968; rpt. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1972), p. 25.

[50] Whitaker, p. 46.

[51] In the "Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones" there are 200 pages before Tristram's admittance to the fellowship of the Round Table and 269 pages which follow.

[52] Larry D. Benson, Malory's 'Morte Darthur' (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 116. See also Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1485; and Scudder, p. 252.

[53] Maureen Fries, "Malory's Tristram as Counter-hero to the *Morte Darthur*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 76 (1975), 611.

[54] Fries, p. 611.

Notes to Chapter III

[1] T. C. Rumble, "'The Tale of Tristram': Development by Analogy," in *Malory's Originality: A Critical Study of 'Le Morte Darthur*,' ed. R. M. Lumiansky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), p. 181.

[2] Charles Moorman, *The Book of Kyng Arthur: The Unity of Malory's 'Morte Darthur*' (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), p. 98.

[3] Charles Moorman, "Courtly Love in Malory," *English Literary History*, 27 (1960), 173.

[4] Rumble, p. 182.

[5] Maureen Fries, "Malory's Tristram as Counter-Hero to the *Morte Darthur*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 76 (1975), p. 605.

[6] Fries, p. 613.

[7] Vida D. Scudder, *Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory: A Study of the Book and Its Sources* (1917; rpt. New York: Haskell House, 1965), p. 233.

[8] Scudder, p. 241.

[9] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1528.

[10] Rumble, p. 182.

[11] Penelope Doob, *Nebuchadnezzar's Children: Conventions of Madness in Middle English Literature* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 2. Doob points out that the Bible continually attributes disease, physical or mental, to sin.

[12] Doob, p. 12.

[13] Doob, p. 54.

[14] Doob, p. 9. Doob cites medieval logic linking rage with madness: ". . .the passion of rage, which is often a sin, raises the body's temperature and dries the various bodily fluids. . . .The result may well be fever and madness. . . ."

[15] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1471.

[16] Isode White Hands is mentioned only once more in the narrative. Tristram enters the tournament at Harde Roche in disguise; Arthur's knights do not believe that this powerful stranger can be Tristram, for he is rumoured to be in Brittany with Isode White Hands (p. 558).

According to Canon Law, Tristram could seek an annulment of his marriage under two articles: Can. 1142: Matrimonium non consummatum inter baptizatos vel inter partem baptizatam et partem non baptizatam a Romano Pontifice dissolvi potest iusta de causa, utraque parte rogante vel alterutra, etsi altera pars sit invita. (A non-consummated marriage between baptized persons or between a baptized party and a non-baptized party can be dissolved by the Roman Pontiff for a just cause, at the request of both parties or of one of the parties, even if the other party is unwilling.)

Can 1084: Impotentia coeundi antecedens et perpetua, sive ex parte viri sive ex parte mulieris, sive absoluta sive relativa, matrimonium ex ipsa eius natura dirimit. (Antecendent and perpetual impotence to have intercourse, whether on the part of the man or of the woman, which is either absolute or relative, of its very nature invalidates marriage.) *Code of Canon Law* (Washington: Canon Law Society of America, 1983).

Similar articles were in effect in Medieval Canon Law. See R. H. Helmholz, *Marriage Litigation in Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 87-90. In Malory's time, as now, non-consummation of the marriage was popularly regarded as one of the grounds for annulment. If Tristram had wished to pursue the matter, he likely could have sued for annulment on the grounds of consanguinity as well. His father married the daughter of King Howell of Brittany. Tristram later marries the daughter of King Howell of Brittany. Even with a generation or two between the two kings, Tristram's stepmother and his wife are very probably related within the four degrees of consanguinity specified by the fourth Lateran Council in 1215. See Helmholz, p. 78.

[17] See Doob, pp. 31-34 for the recognized symptoms of madness in the Middle Ages. See also Richard Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment and Demonology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), pp. 9-10, for a description of the wild man's typical habitat. In his madness, Tristram conforms to this convention.

[18] Doob, p. 40.

[19] Bernheimer, p. 14.

[20] Bernheimer, pp. 9-10.

[21] Muriel Whitaker, *Arthur's Kingdom of Adventure: The World of Malory's Morte Darthur* (Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 1984), p. 62.

[22] Jacqueline T. Schaefer, "Tristan's Folly: Feigned or Real?" *Tristania*, 3 (1977), p. 5. This article is a study of the *Folie Tristan*

poems. Schaefer compares Tristan to the stock figure of the medieval wild man or fool. In the poems, and in some versions of the prose romance, he arms himself with a club.

[23] Doob, p. 39.

[24] Doob, p. 38.

[25] Doob, p. 36.

[26] Doob, p. 55.

[27] Donald D. Schueler, "The Tristram Section of Malory's Morte Darthur," Studies in Philology, 65 (1968), 66.

[28] Schueler, pp. 65-66.

[29] P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," in Essays on Malory, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 95.

[30] Fries, p. 608.

[31] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1733.

[32] Vinaver, Commentary, p. 1464.

[33] Here Malory introduces a dilemma which will have resounding consequences later in the Morte Darthur when Launcelot's loyalty to his king opposes courtesy to his lady.

[34] Joseph R. Ruff, "Malory's Gareth and Fifteenth-century Chivalry," Studies in Medieval Culture, 14 (1966), 107.

Notes to Conclusion

[1] Donald G. Schueler, "The Tristram Section of Malory's *Morte Darthur*," *Studies in Philology*, 65 (1968), 66.

[2] D. S. Brewer, "The Present Study of Malory," in *Arthurian Romance*, ed. D. D. R. Owen (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1970; rpt. 1972), p. 85.

[3] Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status," in *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, ed. J. G. Peristiany (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), pp. 21-39.

[4] Pitt-Rivers, p. 33.

[5] R. T. Davies, "The Worshipful Way in Malory," in *Patterns of Love and Courtesy: Essays in Memory of C. S. Lewis*, ed. John Lawlor (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), pp. 157-77. See also Stephen J. Miko, "Malory and the Chivalric Order," *Medium Aevum*, 35 (1966), 215.

[6] Janet Wilson, "Lancelot and the Concept of Honour in the 'Morte Darthur,' Parts VII and VIII," *Parergon*, 14 (1976), 24.

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